Daily Report
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CONTENTS

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

28 March Middle East and South Asia Review 1

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on 'Uprising,' U.S. Middle East Moves *[Baghdad Voice of the PLO]* 4
PLO's 'Arafat on 'Uprising,' Shultz Plan *[Baghdad Voice of the PLO]* 4
'Arafat To Arrive in Moscow for Talks 4 Apr *[KUNA]* 6
'Arafat Criticizes Shultz Mideast Mission *[KUNA]* 6
Qaddumi Praises Shultz Meeting With PNC Members *[KUNA]* 7
Meeting Called 'Important' *[Beirut Voice of Lebanon]* 7
PLO Executive Committee Statement on Land Day *[Baghad Voice of the PLO]* 8
PNSF, PPSF Leaderships Meet in Damascus *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 9

South Asian Regional Affairs

Proximity Talks on Afghan Issue Continue 10
Noorani on Accord Prospects *[Islamabad]* 10
Talks To Continue Monday *[AFP]* 10

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

'Abd al-Majid Returns From ICO Conference 11
Shamir Peace Ideas Reportedly Rejected *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 24 Mar]* 11
Israel 'Playing With Fire' Over Saudi Threats *[AL-AKHBAR 25 Mar]* 11
Shamir's 'Foolhardy Lie' Termed 'Contemptible' *[AL-AHRAM 23 Mar]* 12
Cairo Commentator Criticizes Ties With Israel *[AL-SHA'B 22 Mar]* 12
'Abd al-Majid Welcomes Shultz' Palestinian Talks 13
'Abd al-Majid Confers With PNC's Sa'id Kamal 14
PLO Envoy Denounces Threats to Saudi Arabia 14
Jordanian House Speaker Departs 24 March 14
Trade Unions To 'Boycott' Tripoli Meeting 14

Libya

Forces Will Be Withdrawn From Egyptian Border 14
Statement Denies Massing Troops on Chad Border 15
Libyan Commander in Chad Joins Opposition 15
DFLP's Hawatimah Arrives, Makes Statement 15
Jabir Sees PFLP's Habash, Lebanon's Hawi 16

Tunisia

Mestiri Backs Saudis Against Israeli 'Threats' *[SPA]* 16

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Intra-Gulf Affairs

Indian Tanker Attacked by Iranian Gunboats *[Delhi]* 17

More on Gunboat Attack *[Delhi]* 17
Iranian Gunboats Hit Liberian Tanker in Gulf *[AFP]* 17

Kuwait

Foreign Minister on Ties With Saudi Arabia 17
Cabinet Backs Saudi Arabia Over PRC Missiles 17

Oman

Jordan's King Husayn Arrives From Pakistan *[Amman]* 18
Holds Talks With Sultan Qabus 18

PDRY

Protocol on Oil Signed With Soviet Union 18

Saudi Arabia

Kingdom Grateful for Egypt's Stand on Missiles 19
Editorial Views Purchase of PRC Missiles *[AL-RIYAD 21 Mar]* 19

IRAQ

Command Councils View ICO Meeting, War 20
Perez de Cuellar's Statement on Gas 'Biased' *[WAKH]* 21
Paper Defends Use of 'All Kinds' of Weapons 21
Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities 22
Shelling of Basra Continues 22
Communique Details Air Strikes 22
Communique No 3,097 23
8 Downings Denied, 1 Admitted 24
42d, 43d Missile Strikes 24
Communique No 3,098 24
Plane Downing Denied 25
Iranian Missile Hits Baghdad 25
Missile Strikes Reported 25
Shelling of Cities Continues 26
Jets Attack 'Maritime Target' 26
3 Missiles Fired at Qom 26
Planes Raid 4 Iranian Cities 26

ISRAEL

Vanunu Sentenced to 18 Years Imprisonment 27
'Mitigating Circumstances' Cited 27
Vanunu Appeals to Supreme Court 27
Saudi Arabia Warns Against Attack on Missiles 27
Silence Over Iraqi Gas Use Causes 'Amazement' 27
Foreign Ministry Condemns Acts 27
'Indignation' Expressed Over Shultz Meeting *[MA'ARIV 25 Mar]* 27
Shamir Sees 'No Chances' for Negotiations *[MA'ARIV 27 Mar]* 28
Addresses Knesset on Peace 28
Cabinet Hears Shamir Report, Views Other Matters 31
Further on 27 March Session 32
Mubarak Sends Shamir Message on Peace Process 32
Shamir Response 32
'Ulterior Motives' Said Behind U.S. Travel Ban 32
Ministers' Offices Welcome Shultz Visit 33
Palestinians 'Hopeful' 33
'Arafat Aide Says Talks With Shultz To Continue *[MA'ARIV 28 Mar]* 33
Yosi Beilin Discusses Negotiations Outlook 33

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories 35
2 Dead, 7 Wounded in W. Bank 35
Riots Reported After Prayers 35
1 Killed in Tulkarm Rioting 35
Another Death Reported in Riots 35
Gaza Acting Mayor Resigns 36
Resignation of Mayor Denied 36
Mayors Not To Resign 36
Detentions Increase 'Greatly' 36
Arabs Still Seeking Jobs 37
Strikes Underway in Territories 37
Paper Circumvents Ban By Printing Supplement 37
AL-ITTIHAD Supplements Banned 37
Knesset Transfers Political Debate to Committee 37
Yosef Hermelin Resigns as Shin Bet Director 37
'Amiram Nir Reportedly Resigning Position 37

LEBANON

Clashes Erupt in Palestinian Camp; 7 Wounded *[RFL]* 38
Fatah Official Assassinated *[VOL]* 38
Further on Shootings *[RFL]* 38
Clashes Continue 26 Mar *[RFL]* 38
'Cautious Calm' Prevails 38
PLO Reportedly Fires 8 Rockets at Israel *[RFL]* 38
PLO Official Says Beirut Offices To Reopen *[VOL]* 38

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Foreign Ministry Protests Pakistani Air Attack 39
Border Question 'Irrelevant' at Geneva Talks 39
Democratic Left Issues 'Political Platform' 39
Hezbollah Leader Criticizes 7-Party Alliance 41
Najibullah, Others Discuss Returnees Commission 42
Pakistani Militias Block Refugees' Return 42
National Front Session Discusses Elections 43
Najibullah Speaks 43
Chief of General Staff Reviews Operations 43
'Terrorist' Group in Bamian Province 'Crushed' 44
Islamabad Reports on Helmand Province Operations 44

Bangladesh

Ershad Lists Government's Achievements 44
Ershad Message on Eve of Independence Day 44
Orders Release of Prisoners 45
Ershad Dismisses Council of Ministers 27 Mar 45
Moudud Ahmed New Prime Minister *[AFP]* 45
New Council of Ministers 45
Ershad Leaves on 4-Day Visit to Thailand 46
President Pays Official Visit to Thailand *[cross-reference]* 46
AFP: 52 Injured in Dhaka Violence 25 Mar 46

India

Sikhs Claim Responsibility for Jabalpur Blast *[AFP]* 46
Terrorists Kill 12 in Amritsar District 27 Mar 47
Arms, Rocket-Launchers Unearthed in Punjab 47
Chinese Assault Rifles Seized 47

Ghisingh Calls for Peace; Violence Continues 47
Airport Gunman Suspected Abu Nidal Group Member *[AFP]* 47
Report on Sending Army to Kabul Denied 48
Pant Comments on Pakistan Nuclear Technology 48
State Minister on Defense Production Advances 48
Ershad Move To Create Islamic Republic Noted 48

Iran

ICO Delegate Taskhiri Explains Walkout 49
Assails Jordanians' Behavior *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 49
Radio Commentary on Meeting 49
Musavi-Ardabili Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon 50
Reportage, Commentary on Use of Toxic Gases 51
Commentary Assails Iraq 51
UN Team To Investigate 51
Speaker Cables Counterparts 52
Speaker on Iraq's 'Crimes' 52
Musavi-Ardabili Letter to UN 53
Health Minister Petitions WHO 53
UK Asked To Treat Victims 53
Musavi on Public Mourning 53
Musavi Comments on Cities War, Halabjah 53
Musavi Addresses Cabinet on Resistance, ICO 54
Foreign Minister To Visit Greece 28 March 54
Elections Headquarters Issues Statement 54
Missile Strikes, Ground Operations Continue 55
85 Casualties in Miandoab 55
Iraqi Jet Downed Near Borujerd 55
Iraqi Positions Bombed 55
Iraqi Aircraft Bomb Ilam 55
IRGC Attacks Oil Jetties 55
Air Force Bombs Troops 55
Kurds Attack Iraqi Bases 55
Iraqi Sukhoi-22 Jet Downed 55
Iraqi Cities Shelled 56
Communique No 3,153 56
Missiles Fired at Baghdad 56
Operation in Northeast Iraq 56
More on 'Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4' 56
More Territory Taken in Iraq 57
Enemy Losses Detailed 57
Iraqi Counterattack 'Crushed' 57
South Al-Sulaymaniyah Liberated 57
Strategic Heights Captured 57
Missiles Hit Tehran, Esfahan 57
Reprisal Missiles Fired 58
Air Force Prevents Enemy Moves 58
WIH Denies Planes Shot Down 58
Iraqi Planes Bomb Hamadan 58
Communique No 3,154 58
IRGC, Kurds Destroy Bases 58
Khatem ol-Anbiya' Communique 59
Tehran on Tanker Attacks 59

Pakistan

'Official-Level' Talks Held in Geneva 28 Mar 59
8 Injured in Rawalpindi Explosion 25 March 59
King Husayn Ends Official Visit, Departs 60
Commentary on Visit 60
Naval Chief Departs for 12-Day PRC Visit 60

28 March Middle East and South Asia Review

LD281358 [Editorial Report]

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Military Action—Missile attacks continued 26 and 27 March with Iran firing two missiles at Basra and two at Baghdad in retaliation for Iraqi attacks on Esfahan and Tehran, where more than seven people were killed, according to reports carried by IRNA.

An Iraqi military communique cited by Voice of the Masses radio announced 13 casualties in Iran's missile strike on Baghdad. Iraq fired four "Al-Husayn" missiles at Tehran and two at Esfahan, according to military announcements carried by Voice of the Masses radio.

IRNA reported more than 53 killed in Iraqi air raids on Hamadan, Ilam, Shushtar, Bakhtaran, Miandoab, Kuhdasht, and Borujerd between 25 and 28 March. According to IRNA, an Iraqi plane was downed 26 March near Borujerd.

An Iraqi military spokesman cited by INA refuted Iranian allegations on the downing of a plane. Iraqi planes also raided the city of Malayer, according to an Iraqi military communique cited by Voice of the Masses radio 25 March.

Iran in turn shelled Iraqi economic, industrial, and military centers in Al-'Amarah, Basra, Al-'Aziz, Al-Qurnah, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Naft Khaneh, Mandali, Khanaqin, Banmil, and Umm Qasr port, IRNA reported.

INA reported 10 casualties resulting from Iranian shelling of Basra, Al-Dayr, Al-Zubayr, and Al-Qurnah. Iranian jet-fighters also struck Iraqi positions and bombed supply roads and forces in the Al-'Amarah operational theater in 18 air raids carried out 25 March, according to a military communique cited by IRNA.

Iran launched a new military offensive in northeastern Iraq in which it claimed to have "completely liberated" the southern section of Al-Sulaymaniyah Province

An Iranian communique cited by Tehran radio 27 March announced that 9 villages were "liberated," 3 Iraqi battalions were totally destroyed, and more than 1,500 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded in the "Bayt al-Moqaddas-4" operations.

The radio also reported the capture of various heights and "strategic" summits in the Darband Khan region of Iraq. An Iraqi military communique noted 15 casualties in Iranian shelling of Darband Khan city 25 March, according to Voice of the Masses radio.

In continued action in the "Val-Fajr-10" operations, Tehran radio reported that Iraqi troop concentrations were bombed 26 March. WIH Headquarters "categorically" denied Iraqi claims that three F-5's were downed 26 March in the "Val-Fajr-10" operational sector.

The spokesman, cited by IRNA, said no Iranian planes or helicopters had been downed inside Iraqi territory. However, according to a military statement carried by Tehran radio, an Iraqi Sukhoi-22 was downed in the "Val-Fajr-10" theater.

An Iraqi military spokesman cited by INA denied Iranian allegations on the downing of eight planes, but confirmed that one plane was downed over enemy territory.

IRNA also reported that an Iraqi helicopter attempting to attack Iranian positions in Sharhani, southern sector, was downed.

In the Gulf, Iraqi jets dealt an "accurate, effective blow" to a maritime target off Lavan Island 27 March, according to a military spokesman cited by INA.

On the same day, two tankers from the neutral countries of India and Denmark were attacked by gunboats off the coast of Dubayy, Tehran radio noted, citing Western press reports.

Delhi radio reported that the Iranian attack caused a fire aboard the Indian vessel, damaged the engine room, and injured a crewman. As for action in the northern sector of the Gulf, an Iraqi communique announced that soldiers defending Al-'Amiq port sunk 3 craft in a flotilla of 12 Iranian boats attempting to attack the facility 25 March.

Turkish Protest—Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal declared that if foreign aircraft violate Turkish airspace, "every necessary measure will be adopted, including opening fire," Ankara radio reported 27 March.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry had determined that Iran bombed a "target within Turkish territory, far away from the Turkish-Iranian border," the radio reported, adding that Iran had been "strongly" urged to take measures to prevent a repetition of the incident.

In a note protesting that Iraqi planes used Turkish airspace to bomb Iran, the Iranian envoy in Ankara denied that Iranian planes bombed the Turkish border area.

Israel

Saudi Missiles Controversy—If Israel launches a preemptive strike against the Kingdom's missiles, the surviving missiles will be fired on Israel, according to a Saudi warning reported by Jerusalem radio 25 March.

The message was sent to the Israelis via the United States, the station noted. In response to a message from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir declared that Israel "never threatened anyone" but merely expressed its "concern" over the introduction of "dangerous weapons" into the region, Jerusalem radio reported.

Upcoming Shultz Visit—The United States is waging an "intimidation campaign" against Israel, Prime Minister Shamir charged in remarks cited by IDF radio 27 March.

Shamir was addressing a cabinet meeting which the radio described as "conducted in loud voices and a tense atmosphere." In remarks cited by MA'ARIV, Shamir stated that "there are no chances for negotiations at this time," and he described the disturbances in the territories as the "greatest obstacle" to peace.

According to Jerusalem radio, the Prime Minister's Office nevertheless expressed "satisfaction" over the U.S. decision to "intervene on a high level for furthering the political process."

The office of Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also welcomed the upcoming visit of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

Resignations—'Amiram Nir, the prime minister's antiterrorism adviser, has resigned, Jerusalem radio reported 27 March, recalling that Nir was implicated in the Iran-contra scandal. Shin Bet Director Yosef Herelim also resigned his post effective 1 April, IDF radio reported.

Sentences—Mordekhay Vanunu was sentenced to 18 years in prison for espionage and treason, Jerusalem radio announced 27 March. The sentencing judges explained in their decision that they considered the "mitigating circumstances" of Vanunu's "full cooperation during his interrogation and the harsh conditions of his imprisonment," IDF radio added.

In another court decision the same day, the sentry on duty the night of the hang glider attack was sentenced to 1 and 1/2 years in prison for "disgraceful conduct" and "desertion" of his post, Jerusalem radio also reported.

Territories—In the West Bank three Palestinians were killed in Maythalun village by IDF gunfire 27 March, and a fourth youth died of wounds sustained when soldiers opened fire to clear the way for a tourist bus in Salfit, IDF radio reported.

The previous day two Palestinians were killed in Tulkarm District, Jerusalem radio reported, and two were killed during riots in Tarqumiyah on 25 March following Friday prayers.

Palestinian Affairs

"The new Israeli-U.S. plan is an attempt to abort, destroy, and liquidate the uprising" in the occupied territories, Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, charged in a Baghdad interview broadcast by Voice of the PLO radio 27 March.

While 'Arafat welcomed the U.S. secretary of state's upcoming tour of the region, he stressed that the Palestinians "are not ready to respond" to any proposals that do not provide for the achievement of their rights.

'Arafat commented on Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's recent statement authorizing settlers to fire on Palestinians in self-defense and said that the decision was a "very terrible and serious mistake" that exposes the Israelis' "confusion" and lack of confidence in their ability to deal with the situation.

Lebanon

Clashes broke out 25 March between rival Palestinian factions in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp near Sidon after two Fatah officials were murdered, Beirut radio reported, adding that three other Palestinians were killed and three wounded in the fighting.

A Palestinian source told Radio Monte Carlo that the dispute involved "pro-'Arafat elements."

Regarding the aftermath of recent Israeli raids on Palestinian positions in Lebanon, an unidentified military spokesman for Fatah-Revolutionary Council cited by the clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio 26 March discounted reports that his organization's bases were destroyed.

Only two female combatants firing at the attacking Israeli warplanes were killed, the spokesman added.

ICO Conference

At the close of a 5-day session, the ICO foreign ministers conference issued a "final statement" published by the Amman paper AL-DUSTUR 26 March. The statement, which outlined the proceedings and summarized the resolutions passed at the meeting, stressed the Palestinian question as the "crux" of the Arab-Israeli problem and "hailed with honor and pride the heroic uprising" of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. At the same time, the statement expressed "regret over U.S. policy which ignores the PLO."

The conference expressed solidarity with Saudi Arabia in the face of Israeli threats and "denounced" the disruptive behavior of Iranian pilgrims during the previous hajj season.

All ICO member states were asked to cooperate with Saudi plans to ensure that pilgrims may worship "in safety and humility."

On the subject of the Iran-Iraq war, the conference reiterated the need to implement UN Security Council Resolution No 598 and called on all ICO members to "exert concerted efforts" to end the conflict.

A 26 March meeting of the Iraqi leadership chaired by President Saddam Husayn praised the results of the ICO conference and expressed appreciation for the resolution on the Iran-Iraq conflict, INA reported.

The leadership asserted that "Iraq is firmly determined to use all of the capabilities at its disposal to exterminate the aggressive invaders."

Iraq's "full support" for Saudi Arabia against "insolent threats" was also stated, INA reported.

For its part, a Tehran radio commentary accused the ICO of "reactionary-arrogant collusion" against Iran and stated that, the "anti-Islamic position" of the ICO has "inflicted an irreparable blow to its previously waning prestige."

In further reaction to the outcome of the Amman meeting, Damascus television reported that the Syrian delegation expressed "reservations" regarding the resolutions on the war, the Afghanistan problem, and the issue of minorities in Bulgaria.

Syria also objected to the decision to have Egypt host the 19th ICO conference in 1990, according to a statement carried by Damascus radio.

Libya-Chad

Libya needs permission from no one to exercise "sovereignty" over its territory and protect its borders, according to a Foreign Liaison Bureau statement carried by JANA 26 March.

The statement denied Chadian claims that Libyan troops are massing on the common borders in preparation for attack and termed Chadian reports of Libyan overflights "lies and fabricated claims."

In further charges against Libya, Ndjamena radio reported that 17 Chadians were killed and 60 wounded 21 March when Libyan police used force to subdue rioters demonstrating against their internment in a camp near Tripoli.

Sudan

According to a military statement reported by SUNA, 112 "outlaws" were killed and a "large number" wounded 24 March when the armed forces engaged them in "severe, violent battles" in the Upper Nile Region.

PDRY-USSR

A PDRY-USSR protocol on joint cooperation to exploit oil in Shabwah Governorate was signed in Moscow 25 March, Aden radio reported. YSP Secretary General 'Ali Salim al-Bid and his delegation, which includes the South Yemeni energy minister, have been holding talks in the Soviet Union on ways to strenghten cooperation in developing the PDRY's petroleum resources, the radio added.

Jordan

King Husayn briefed Soviet special envoy Mikhail Sytenko on the results of his talks with Pakistani President Ziaul Haq on the Afghan problem, PETRA-JNA reported 27 March, adding that Sytenko expressed the "Soviet leadership's appreciation" for the king's efforts.

The Jordanian monarch returned home the previous day from visits to Pakistan and Oman, Amman television reported.

Afghanistan

The Pakistani charge d'affaires was summoned 27 March to receive a Foreign Ministry protest charging that the Pakistani Air Force fired on two Afghan warplanes flying near Towr Kham, Nangarhar Province, 19 March, Kabul radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on 'Uprising,' U.S. Middle East Moves

JN262135 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has emphasized that 203 Palestinians were martyred and 6,000 others were wounded by the Zionist occupation soldiers over the past 15 weeks of the blessed Palestinian uprising in the occupied homeland.

In a press statement, brother leader Abu 'Ammar said the occupation forces arrested 15,000 Palestinians over the same period, of whom 3,000 were arrested during the last 3 days.

The brother leader Abu 'Ammar also emphasized that 6,000 miscarriages were recorded in the West Bank and Gaza due to the use of gas bombs by the Israeli troops.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar said the Israeli forces confiscated 17 schools [words indistinct] on Thursday and converted them into detention centers.

On recent U.S. moves in the Middle East, brother leader Abu 'Ammar said these moves will not be fruitful as long as the PLO is not considered a basic party to any settlement in the region.

He said: Shultz must know he cannot impose his plan by jumping over the PLO and the inalienable rights of the Palestinians who are supported by international legitimacy.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar added that the U.S. secretary of state will continue to move in a circle as long as he does not meet with Palestinian representatives.

Shultz is like those who write on water, he said.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar said the U.S. Administration is exerting pressure on the Arab countries through its envoys in the region to prevent them from participating in an Arab summit.

He added that 17 countries out of 20 Arab League member states agreed to convene the summit.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar warned the Israeli leaders of the consequences of their decision to allow Zionist settlers to use arms against Palestinian demonstrators.

PLO's 'Arafat on 'Uprising,' Shultz Plan

JN272111 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1815 GMT 27 Mar 88

["Dialogue" with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, identified by his nom de guerre Abu 'Ammar, by Baghdad Voice of the PLO radio staff, in Baghdad on 27 March—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, our first question is about the Zionist enemy's claims. Hayim Bar-Lev recently claimed that the occupation authorities arrested the field commanders of the uprising.

Chief of Staff Shomron has also promised, as he said and claimed, to liquidate the uprising within 10 days.

Do you have anything to say about these statements and claims?

['Arafat] First of all, what they have said is untrue. They should all know, the Israeli military and political leaderships, that there are mighty people in Palestine. [passage indistinct]

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, for the first time and since the establishment of this strange entity, the settlers have participated on a large-scale in accordance with an official announcement by Yitzhaq Rabin...

['Arafat—interrupting] This is a very terrible and a serious mistake. This means there are two authorities in the street for this Israeli enemy: the authority of the Army and the authority of the settlers.

This is a very serious decision, not only against our people, as those who have made this decision will later pay the price.

However, if they believe they can give the green light to the settlers to use weapons against our people and to carry out massacres against them, then we say our people will confront all forces before them. [passage omitted]

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, in this or that way, the participation of settlers in the campaign of repression against our people reflects the Zionist settlers' lack of confidence in the Israeli machine of repressing the uprising.

['Arafat] Yes, this is the confusion regarding the decision, the decisionmakers, and those who carry out this decision. [passage indistinct] We are coming closer to our objectives.

I call for more steadfastness, firmness, and organization, and I emphasize organization among our people. And say: Work (righteousness): Soon will God observe your work, and his apostle, and the believers. [Koranic verses]

I call for organization in every camp, village, quarter, house, and street. [passage indistinct] Organization, because an organized people can achieve victory. [passage omitted]

[Question] [Words indistinct]

['Arafat] Undoubtedly, there are collaborators with the enemy. [words indistinct] the enemy tries to give the impression that a great percentage of those who do not collaborate are collaboraters.

This is aimed at creating confusion in the Palestinian ranks. Not everyone who is accused of being a collaborator is actually a collaborator. [words indistinct] the great majority of the Palestinian people are nationalist. They were trying to frighten us in Beirut.

There was no single agent for the enemy in Beirut. If there had been a single agent, no Palestinian official would have survived. It was proven beyond any doubt that the enemy was trying to create doubt between a struggler and another, between a citizen and another.

This was the situation that prevailed for a long time in the territory occupied in 1984. Everyone was suspecting everyone until the 50's when [words indistinct].

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, If I may take you to another level of the topics [word indistinct] in the heart of the Palestinian struggle for the liberation of the homeland.

Undoubtedly, the conversion of the Zionist state into a tool of oppression through the use of the Army, police, and armed settlers does not necessarily mean that the entire Israeli community is hostile toward us.

There are democratic and [word indistinct] forces that stand by the Palestinian right. Some of these forces have relations with the PLO and some are seeking to establish such a relationship. Can you explain to our people in Palestine and also to us how to understand this?

['Arafat] [words indistinct] I proudly and strongly say that these democratic forces, the forces of peace which condemned and rejected the [word indistinct] terrorist practices of this ruling military gang through its security forces, Army, and armed settlers. I give my hand to them in salutation.

I say to them that peace requires strong men. We made a decision for peace and [word indistinct]. They should struggle [words indistinct] for this just and comprehensive peace that takes into consideration our people's rights, including the right to return, to self-determination, and to the establishment of their independent Palestinian state.

I am happy that the number [of the Israeli peace forces] is increasing and [word indistinct]. In the first demonstration there were (?8,000) people, in the second there were 100,000, in the fourth, there were 200,000 and so on. I, and all of our brothers follow up what is written. [words indistinct) [Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, within the context of the Zionist campaign of repression against our people, it is noted that this campaign has noticeably escalated following Yitzhaq Shamir's return from Washington.

Do you think Shamir has gotten a green light from the U.S. Administration in this regard?

['Arafat] [words indistinct] Very insolently and unequivocally he says: Kill them instead of wounding them, but away from the television screens. Is there anything worse? [words indistinct] Destroy them. This is Nazism. This is racism.

In contrast, we should understand that this is the new plan. But I tell them: O mountain...

[Question—interrupting] The U.S. plan?

['Arafat] The new Israeli-U.S. plan is an attempt to abort, destroy, and liquidate the uprising. But O mountain, you will not be shaken by the wind; O mountain, you will not be shaken by the wind. I am fully confident in the new generals.

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, it is noted that the mammoth popular Palestinian uprising has put not only the Zionist entity with its Army and all rightwing parties in a dilemma, but also the strategic U.S. ally of this entity.

In the meantime, the Palestinian stand and the Palestine question emerge as an international issue at the top of the agenda of the world as a whole. The United States is moving from one dilemma to another. It becomes exposed daily. How do you view the international situation in view of this Palestinian escalation and the U.S. dilemma?

['Arafat] We must remember [words indistinct] at the beginning of Shultz' shuttle tours. He said: When we failed to control the uprising, Shultz came to rescue us and help us control it.

[Question] [words indistinct]

['Arafat] [words indistinct] We must know this. The basic aim of the U.S. move is to control, abort, and contain the uprising. [passage omitted containing indistinct portions]

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, our people inside and outside the occupied territories wait for what will be brought about by the extraordinary Arab summit called for by President Chadli Bendjedid and immediately supported by the PLO.

What do you expect from this summit? What do you want from this summit?

['Arafat] Look here, Ghassan, this is actually an important question. There are attempts to obstruct the convocation of the summit. We must understand this although 17 states have agreed to attend the summit. The quorum is 11, but there are attempts to obstruct it. Why?

Because what is required is to obstruct the summit conference so that Shultz will be given free movement without facing a single Arab confrontation. [passage omitted containing indistinct portions]

[Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, we heard the news that Shultz will again visit the region from 3-8 April.

['Arafat] He is welcome. The Palestinian stand is as firm and solid as it was before. It is based on the same ground. We are not against any peace initiative, but we are not ready to respond to any initiative that ignores the Palestinian people and their rights, including their right to repatriation, self-determination, and establishment of an independent state whose capital is Jerusalem.

We are flexible and are ready to be flexible but only on the basis of these constants and pillars.

[Question] We are peace advocates.

['Arafat] Undoubtedly. You know that I dealt with you objectively and will continue to deal objectively with every initiative. [passage omitted]

'Arafat To Arrive in Moscow for Talks 4 Apr

LD261021 Kuwait KUNA in English 0949 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Doha, March 26 (KUNA)—Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat is scheduled to arrive in Moscow on April 4 and to meet with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to discuss means to solve the Palestinian cause, Qatari daily 'AL-RAYA' quoted well informed sources as saying Saturday.

The sources added that the Soviet leadership will brief the Palestine Liberation Organization chairman on Soviets, [as received] approval on the convocation of an international peace conference based on an agreement on UN Security Council Resolution 242.

The sources also noted that the UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar call on all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict, including the PLO, will stipulate that the conference will be held according to the UN two resolution-242 and 338, as well as protecting the Palestinians' legitimate rights.

However, 'AL-RAYA' learnt that the Soviet leadership is convinced after the meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduward Shevardnadze, and his U.S. counterpart George Shultz on UN secretary general's invitation to all the parties involved in the conflict including the PLO, in addition to the five permanent members of the Security Council to attend the conference.

The paper also said that 'Arafat at the end of his Moscow visit will proceed to Jordan to coordinate with King Husayn on a plan to submit it to Shultz when he returns to the Middle East during the second week of April to announce the practical steps agreed by all concerned parties to implement the American peace plan on the Middle East.

On the other hand a Palestinian well informed source told 'AL-RAYA' that the peace scenario for the next stage will go ahead as planned, although some of the parties have not yet announced their stances clearly towards the scenario.

The source added that the UN secretary general will call the conference to be held in mid April, and the first session will be attended by the foreign ministers of the parties concerned including the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, as well as PLO delegation, which will participate on equal footing.

'Arafat Criticizes Shultz Mideast Mission

LD270858 Kuwait KUNA in English 0800 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, March 27 (KUNA)—Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir 'Arafat disclosed that the date and place of the Arab foreign ministers emergency meeting will be announced on Wednesday.

In a press conference, held here last night, 'Arafat said that the PLO will present to the meeting, which has been called for by Algeria, a working paper reiterating Arab-Palestinian positions approved by previous Arab summits.

The Palestinian working paper, he added, will call on Arab countries to support and keep alive the uprising in occupied Arab territories, while holding firmly to Arab decisions adopted by the summits regarding the Palestinian question.

At the press conference, 'Arafat strongly criticized the efforts by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz pertaining to a new Middle East peace initiative.

The efforts "come to carry out an advice by Henry Kissinger to increase brutality and the iron fist police of the Israelis against the armless Palestinian people," 'Arafat stressed.

"Kissinger has advised the Israeli prime minister to kill the Palestinians, and not only injure them, but away from the eyes of the camera," 'Arafat added.

Asked about his upcoming visit to Jordan, the PLO official said the visit is "under review by the Palestinian leadership," and praised in this regard the PLO-Jordanian relations.

The ties between the two sides are still in the healing period after they went astray in 1986 over a conflict in finding a common approach for a Middle East peace settlement.

'Arafat met here last night with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and discussed with him developments of the uprising. According to a report by Iraq News Agency, President Saddam assured 'Arafat of Iraq's vehement support to the PLO and the uprising.

The agency added that Saddam also affirmed to 'Arafat that Iraq is fully capable of defending its territories in face of the Iranian aggression.

From his side, the PLO chief executive reassured the Iraqi president that the Palestinians are "with the struggle of the Iraqi people who are justly defending the sovereignty of their land."

Qaddumi Praises Shultz Meeting With PNC Members
LD271359 Kuwait KUNA in English 1308 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, March 27 (KUNA)—The Palestine Liberation Organization Sunday blessed a meeting in Washington Saturday between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and two members of the Palestine National Council, or parliament in exile, who are also American citizens.

The PNC members, Edward Sa'id and Ibrahim Abu al-Lughud [spelling as received] reportedly briefed Shultz on what the Palestinians see acceptable for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

They also told the secretary that Washington should accept to enter into a dialogue with the PLO and recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people.

The PLO's favorable reaction to the Washington meeting was spelled out here in an official statement prepared by the head of the PLO Political Department Faruq Qaddumi and released by the PLO office in Kuwait.

Qaddumi said "We have reviewed the outcome of the meeting and cannot but express our satisfaction with this step."

Sa'id and Abu al-Lughud conveyed to the American secretary the PLO's position on the Palestinian representations in future peace talks, national rights of the Palestinian people, on the independent Palestinian state and the international peace conference on basis of U.N. resolutions, Qaddumi said.

Qaddumi saw the Washington meeting between Shultz and two PNC members as a political victory for the Palestinians.

He said the uprising in the Israeli occupied territories "consolidated the PLO's political standing in the world community and made the inalienable national Palestinian rights a basic ingredient" for a Middle East settlement.

In his brief statement, Qaddumi would not say if Shultz suggested new ideas to PNC members on how to overcome the problem of Palestinian representation in Middle East peace talks called for by a new U.S. proposal which Shultz himself brought to the Middle East leaders early this month.

Israel has protested the meeting claiming that Washington had violated a 13-year old commitment not to talk to PLO representatives until and unless the PLO recognized Israel and halted armed struggle against it.

But a U.S. State Department spokesman rebutted the Israeli argument and said Shultz met Sa'id and Abu al-Lughud as two American citizens closely associated with the Middle East politics.

Shultz will fly to the Middle East next Sunday for talks in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Syria and Saudi Arabia on the new American peace proposal which however was rejected earlier in the month by Israel, the PLO and Syria. Egypt and Jordan had seen positive elements in the plan.

The plan calls for limited self-rule for the Palestinians to be followed by Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Meeting Called 'Important'
NC271625 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Bassam Abu Sharif, adviser to the PLO leader, has described the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz with PNC members Edward Sa'id and Ibrahim Abu al-Lughud as an important development.

He said the PLO considers this meeting as one between Shultz and the organization itself. He noted that the PLO leadership is studying an urgent report on the meeting and expressed the PLO's readiness to participate in any constructive effort, particularly in an international conference in which the Israeli Government and the PLO participate on an equal footing.

PLO Executive Committee Statement on Land Day

JN262049 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1705 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Statement by the PLO Executive Committee on the occasion of 30 March Land Day; date, place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] O masses of our militant Palestinian people: These days our people throughout the homeland in the Galilee, the triangle, the Negev, the proud West Bank, and the brave Gaza Strip and also in all places in the diaspora are marking the Land Day anniversary.

During these days this anniversary enjoys prominent, additional meanings through the momentum of the blessed uprising. This uprising has continued and has entered its 5th [as heard] month stressing, in a comprehensive and strong way, all the meanings that were demonstrated on Land Day.

These meanings are the solid and comprehensive national unity of our people, the unity of their groups and generations, the unity of their factions, forces, and attitudes, the unity of their leadership and objectives, as well as the power of clinging to the land and the homeland, and the ability to continue struggle with genuine creativity.

O our heroic people, your gigantic, blessed uprising is escalating watered by the blood of martyrs and the wounded, fed by the suffering of the captives and detainees, and supported by the forces that are filled with belief in the homeland and by the hope of our children, women, and men vis-a-vis the ugliest methods of oppression, terrorism, violence, and crime carried out by this enemy which stands on our sacred, blessed land.

The uprising affirms to the whole world that our people will not kneel down, that their determination will not yield, and that their uprising will not stop until they achieve all of their inalienable national rights, including their right to repatriation, to self-determination, and to the establishment of a free, independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Vis-a-vis the uprising's volcano which erupted and to confront its huge effects on the Arab and international levels and even on Israeli society itself, the U.S. Administration quickly dispatched its envoys to our Arab region.

Through some new-old plans, these envoys tried to abort our people's blessed uprising, circumvent its gains, and foil its great results, effects, and achievements.

Our people's voice has been and continues to be unified under their legitimate leadership, the PLO leadership. This voice loudly declared the boycotting of Shultz and his plans which ignore our people's inalienable national rights approved by the international legality.

Our great people asserted that they do not accept an alternative to complete independence as part of their independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative.

Our people also asserted that they will firmly resist, as they did in the past, all plans that do not recognize their national rights regardless of the names of such plans, such as civil administration, job distribution, alleged development plans, the plan for autonomy, or other Arab or foreign names.

The PLO warns our Arab masses of this great conspiracy being concocted against the Palestinian people and their sacred national and pan-Arab cause. The PLO is confident that no matter how U.S. and Israeli pressures may increase, there will be no one who accepts involvement in such schemes against the Palestinian people and the Arab nation.

The Arab and Palestinian constants approved at the Arab summits, including the Arab peace plan unanimously approved at the Fes summit and the international conference approved at the Amman and Casablanca summits, are the path to a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

O masses of our great people, on this glorious occasion, Land Day, we stress the importance of a quick convocation of an extraordinary Arab summit conference in response to the Algerian president's initiative to discuss ways to support and perpetuate the blessed uprising, to declare a unified Arab stand toward all plans hostile to the Arab nation and the rights of our Palestinian people, and to stress anew the resolutions adopted by previous Arab summits, particularly the Fes, Rabat, Amman, and Casablanca summits.

These summits emphasized an effective international conference to resolve the Middle East problem with the participation of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing, and also to realize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people based on all UN resolutions related to the Palestine question and the Middle East.

The PLO is confident that the Arab brothers' response to this call will be a new and strong motive for our people to escalate their seething struggle against the Zionist invaders.

The PLO will foil all attempts by any party to tamper with our people's inalienable national rights or with the great gains achieved by their blessed uprising.

O masses of our great Palestinian people, this creative revolutionary cohesion between the great Palestinian steadfastness in Lebanon and the continuation of the blessed uprising and its escalation for the 4th consecutive month has made our national cause take a major

position among world issues, has given it more allies and friends, and escalated the isolation of the Zionist entity and its protectors in the U.S. Administration.

This revolutionary harmony between the RPG children and the stone-throwing children entrenches the bright fact of the impossibility of reaching any solution in the Middle East region without achieving the inalienable national rights of our heroic people.

Through this revolutionary effort, which constitutes this framework of our people's gigantic revolution, the Palestinian flag will fly over the walls of Jerusalem, God willing.

And to enter your temple as they had entered it before, and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power. [Koranic verses]

O our heroic masses, on the glorious Land Day we express our appreciation for all fraternal forces in the Arab world; to all our friends in the world, particularly the states of the socialist bloc, foremost being the USSR, to our friends in the PRC; the Islamic states; the nonaligned states; the African states, and all the honorable and free men in the world, including the forces of peace and democracy in Israel, who supported our people and their just struggle and expressed their rejection and denunciation of the terrorist, repressive, and fascist measures by these military gangs and the fascist leaders who are leading this official organized terrorism against our people and children.

On this occasion, the PLO calls on all fraternal Arab states, all the friendly states, and the states that love freedom and peace in the world to confront the U.S. Administration's aggressive policy against our people, their rights, and their representation.

The recent U.S. stand in this regard was the U.S. decison to close the PLO's UN mission in New York, thus ignoring all international laws and regulations and the international unanimity which was expressed by the UN General Assembly's vote that rejected and denounced this illegitimate decision.

This proves that the dangers posed by this U.S. policy is not aimed only against the PLO and the Palestinian people, but also against all that the United States claims of false efforts to settle the Middle East crisis and to achieve peace in the region.

In fact, developments every day prove how much this U.S. Administration is involved against our people's rights and its insistence on supporting the Israeli rulers and on encouraging them to continue their occupation, to escalate their repression of our people, and to continue usurping their rights.

O masses of our great Palestinian people, victory is coming closer. The Zionist occupation of our holy land will inevitably be defeated. Let us strengthen our unity and organization whether inside or outside our occupied territory.

Let us organize this revolutionary march of our people in all positions of struggle and work. And say: "Work (righteousness): Soon will God observe your work, and his apostle, and the believers. [Koranic verses]

On Land Day, we call for more work and for further escalation of this blessed uprising. Let us all say on Land Day, the day of the land and the uprising, the day of the land and the revolution, that no voice shall rise above the voice of the uprising until the end of the occupation.

The night of the occupation will never continue. It will inevitably vanish. Dawn is coming and victory is also coming. Thus, on the glorious Land Day let us announce it as a resounding cry and make the whole world hear that we are all faithful soldiers defending our people and our inalienable national rights which we will never abandon.

They are our rights to repatriation, self-determination, and establishing our independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Let us make Land Day fire under the feet of the occupiers.

Let us make this day and every day a new epic of the epics of heroism, steadfastness, and defiance. The day of victory is coming. The time when our flag will fly over Jerusalem and when the voice of freedom will rise from its minarets and churches is inevitably and undoubtedly coming. They see it as very far and we see it as very near. We tell the truth.

Glory to our righteous martyrs. Greetings to our prisoners and detainees in the occupation prisons. We pledge an oath to our children, women, men, and all of our people that we will continue our revolutionary march until victory. Victory to our people's blessed uprising.

[Signed] The PLO

PNSF, PPSF Leaderships Meet in Damascus

JN261849 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 mar 88

[Louis Faris dispatch from Damascus]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] A meeting was held here between the leaderships of the PNSF and the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF] during which they discussed the PPSF's decision to suspend its participation in PNSF meetings.

Khalid 'Abd al-Majid [not further identified] told our radio that the PPSF wants to reach a formula that would contribute toward activating the PNSF role, developing

its stands with the aim of realizing a comprehensive Palestinian national unity within the PLO framework, and helping to rectify relations between Syria and the PLO—a move which is necessary to support the Palestinian uprising.

In another statement to our radio, 'Abd al-Hadi al-Nashshash [not further identified] denied reports on clashes in the Sidon area between pro- and anti-'Arafat elements. He said the anti-'Arafat elements did not take part in the fighting which was confined to pro-'Arafat elements themselves. Al-Nashshash deplored the clashes.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Proximity Talks on Afghan Issue Continue

Noorani on Accord Prospects

BK270906 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Noorani said that Soviet willingness to assume the role of guarantor could lead to a Geneva agreement and political settlement of the Afghanistan problem.

Talking to newsmen in Geneva yesterday, he said Pakistan already informed UN representative Diego Cordovez that it does not seek any amendment, change, nor modification in the text of the four instruments of the proposed Geneva accord.

He said Pakistan has accepted in principle Cordovez' personal efforts to establish a broad-based transitional government. We feel that as soon as the guarantors resolve the issue of symmetry, the instruments can be signed.

Zain Noorani said that the Soviet Union is not prepared to stop or suspend aid to the Kabul regime, and it wants to exercise its unilateral right to continue aid to the Kabul regime.

In contrast, the United States is ready to stop military aid on a mutual basis. He said mutual assumption of equal responsibilities will end the internal strife in Afghanistan and brighten the prospects of peace.

Meanwhile, the Soviet ambassador at large, Nikolay Kozyrov, has met with Zain Noorani in Geneva and reportedly has briefed him on the Shultz-Shevardnadze talks in Washington.

Talks To Continue Monday

AU251340 Paris AFP in English 1325 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Geneva, March 25 (AFP)—United Nations mediator Diego Cordovez said Friday that the indirect peace talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan, held here under U.N. auspices, would continue Monday.

His statement followed separate meetings with the delegations of the two countries.

It ended speculation that the talks might be suspended following a failure to reach agreement on Afghanistan at superpower talks in Washington earlier this week.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz could not agree on the simultaneous ending of support for, on the one hand, the Kabul government, and on the other, mujahidin rebels fighting against it.

Meanwhile, Pakistani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Noorani said in Geneva that progress had been made, but "at a crawling pace."

Egypt

'Abd al-Majid Returns From ICO Conference

NC251640 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1620 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned to Cairo this evening after a 5-day visit to Jordan, during which he attended the meetings of the Islamic foreign ministers conference. The conference began on 21 March and ended today. In a statement after his return, Dr 'Abd al-Majid called on Israel to take proper note of President Husni Mubarak's message. Israel has to follow a road other than that of threats and intimidations, he said.

He welcomed the role played by the United States and the visits that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz might make to the area.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid stated that the conference of Islamic foreign ministers was very successful. In this regard, he praised the role of the Jordanian monarch, government, and people in ensuring the success of the conference and helping it to achieve its political and economic aims. He also said that Egypt was pleased that Cairo had been chosen as the venue for the 19th conference in 1990. This choice was accepted by all the ICO members, he stated, with the exception of the Syrian foreign minister, whose view was disregarded. This underlines the fact of Egypt's full return to the Arab and Islamic world. He added that this was manifested by the spirit of solidarity with and understanding of Egypt which prevailed during the conference.

Regarding the Iranian envoy's speech to the conference, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that the Iranian envoy, who appeared emotional and angry, focused his attack at the start of his speech on Egypt and on its return to the Arab and Islamic world. This surprised some, and it became clear that Iran was isolated at this conference. None of the delegations rallied to it, he declared.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid also noted that President Mubarak's message to Israel yesterday had had a good effect among the Islamic delegations. It was highlighted by the Jordanian and Arab press in banner headlines, he added.

Regarding the Egyptian delegation's efforts at the conference, the Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister stated that his role was not limited to the conference sessions. He also had important talks on the sidelines with the majority of the delegations attending the conference, he said.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid will present a detailed report on his participation in the conference to President Mubarak.

Shamir Peace Ideas Reportedly Rejected

PM241527 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Mar 88 p 1

[Unattributed Report: "Egypt Emphasizes Its Commitment to Arab Stand on Peace Plans in Region"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Informed diplomatic sources in Cairo have confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Egypt has rejected the Israeli ideas Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir presented to the U.S. Administration during his recent visit to Washington with a view to amending the U.S. plan regarding reactivating peace efforts in the Middle East and convening an international conference.

The sources said that Egypt told U.S. envoy Philip Habib during his recent visit to Cairo that the "Shamirist ideas" constitute an attempt to revive the autonomy talks, which Egypt has rejected since 1982 after Israel issued a number of decisions depriving autonomy of its true concept, and that Egypt insists on its position, namely the rejection of the autonomy formula.

The sources pointed out that Egypt has informed Washington of Egypt's current commitment to the need to convene an international conference in implementation of the Arab stand on it, which clearly crystallized at the Arab summit held in Amman on 8 November last year. And that Egypt cannot adopt a stand to which the other parties concerned, in particular Jordan and the PLO, do not agree.

Israel 'Playing With Fire' Over Saudi Threats

JN272037 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 25 Mar 88 p 4

[Editorial: "Israel...and the Mistake of its Life"]

[Text] How long will Israel believe that it can ignore all international laws and behave as if no one can stop it, return it to the civilized world, and make it adhere to the principles and ethics of the states that relinquished the law of the jungle many centuries ago?

Delusion and sick imaginations have made the Tel Aviv rulers believe that they can launch aggressions against any state and deal blows to any area without being punished. These rulers were encouraged by the fact that they escaped punishment following the criminal shelling of the Iraqi nuclear reactor, the raid on Tunisia, and the invasion of Lebanon. All of these were flagrant crimes committed against independent, sovereign states not in a state of war with Israel, which may justify these attacks—attacks which the United Nations and the Security Council were established to prevent and punish those who perpetrate them. Nevertheless, these bodies were unable even to issue resolutions of condemnation, which is the least they could do.

It seems Israel became accustomed to this method, which is practiced by the Mafia and organized crime gangs, and was enhanced by its sins so that it is now threatening to raid the missiles that Saudi Arabia obtained from China to safeguard its security. Israel believes such an operation will be merely a new link in the chain of terrorist and aggressive acts it always practices without fear of punishment or questioning. However, Israel will be deluded if it actually believes its delusions this time, and will make the mistake of its life and history, replete with abominable crimes.

Let the Israeli leaders and those who support them know that they are playing with fire. Saudi territories are holy places for hundreds of millions of Muslims worldwide. Any aggression against Saudi Arabia will be an aggression against every Muslim country, and will be countered with the most violent reply. Egypt and the ICO countries currently meeting in Amman have affirmed this. These leaders should think a hundred times before they make this mistake which they and their offspring will regret the rest of their lives.

Shamir's 'Foolhardy Lie' Termed 'Contemptible'
JN251516 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
23 Mar 88 p 7

[Editorial: "A Man of Lies!"]

[Text] It is regrettable that the Israeli prime minister is forced to extricate himself from his dilemma in Washington by lying about Egypt and by accusing it, among other countries, of also opening fire on Palestinian demonstrations.

Shamir previously claimed that demonstrations were held in Rafah and that the Egyptians opened fire on Palestinians. Egypt vehemently rebutted this groundless claim that Shamir put forth to avoid any embarrassment on the local and world level over the bloody atrocities his forces are committing and which continue to take place against the Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories. But to repeat these lies in an impudent manner before the U.S. public during his visit to Washington is something tantamount to a sin, and not a mistake. In politics, mistakes are permissible and can be corrected, and lessons can be learned from them. But to insist on committing them is most certainly a fault, cheeky insolence, and a provocation to which one should not remain silent.

It is also regrettable that Shamir left for Washington with only one thing in mind: Undermining peace efforts and foiling any consensus on the minimum level that the world has accepted. This minimum level is represented by the international conference in preparation for direct talks without any interference. Although he is free to adopt the stand he wants, to promote it as he wishes, and to discuss what is submitted by the other side without attacking any party or slandering this or that side, Shamir insisted on exercising his vile hobby of holding others responsible for his mistakes and the shortcomings in his policy. By doing so, he believes he can extricate himself from the isolation in which he has found himself or in which he has placed himself. By behaving in this contemptible manner, Shamir believes he can drive a wedge into the Arabs' current unity efforts or their consensus on a just peace in the Middle East.

However, even if this foolhardy lie is believed by some in the United States, parts of which continue to prostrate themselves at Israel's feet whether it is right or wrong, it cannot erase the painful and harsh realities that are taking place in the occupied territories and that made Shamir close the occupied territories to prevent the world from seeing the atrocities his forces are committing against unarmed civilians who are only asking for their land and their rights.

Let Shamir learn a lesson from what is taking place and let him not throw stones at the houses of others, he whose house is of glass.

Cairo Commentator Criticizes Ties With Israel
PM280931 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
22 Mar 88 p 12

[Muhammad Mutawalli 'Awad article: "What About the People's Role"?]

[Text] Almighty God has chosen to test me. So I went through a health crisis which nearly finished me, but God spared me. Thanks to God and God alone. During my illness, one picture never left my mind—that of the Egyptian people, suffering day and night and even in their sleep. To a sick body, the words of our great, wise, and decisive Prophet apply perfectly: "In their harmony and compassion, the faithful are like one body. If one part suffers, the whole body comes down with fever and anxiety." How true and accurate that is. Regardless of the names and descriptions of the various parts and functions, the body is an integral unit in feelings and senses. I wish the Muslims of the world would absorb the Prophet's literature and Islamic ethics and follow the teachings of their Prophet.

My illness coincided with the beginning of the revolution of the Muslim Arab people of Palestine in our occupied territory, but not in the Golan Heights (?!). It marked a new method, in the history of revolutions and jihad, against occupation, usurpation, and international terrorism by a foundling state comprised of aliens who, finding nothing in their own countries to ensure Zionist and Jewish domination of the peoples of these countries, emigrated to a Muslim and Christian holy land. They were aided by the British crusade imperialists and the United States. Infidels flock together.

Young people, children, and women have, to the best of my knowledge, staged the first "stone revolution" in history. These stones have attracted the attention, excited, and earned the admiration of the world, especially the freemen of Egypt. God bless the Egyptian students

and the lawyers union because, had it not been for the universities and lawyers union, people would have thought that Egypt's face had become the very same face of the regime ruling it, or the face of the interior minister who represents national terrorism. He has treated as enemies of the homeland and of religion the university students and the worshippers at mosques who wanted to express their resentment of the serpents and agents of Zionism. The homeland and Islam curse him and his terrorist organ which he employs to rule Egypt with torture and force and by turning the people against one another. The recruits who come from their villages as full of patriotism, nobility, and sincerity as Sulayman Khatir [Egyptian soldier who killed Israelis in Sinai] are turned by the regime into instruments of despotism and cruelty unknown to the Egyptian people before this accursed regime.

Every person faithful to his country and religion wonders these days at the waves coming, under the pretext of tourism, from the state of serpents and demons, including effeminate young men and debaucherous girls who peddle drugs and forged currency and gather information about the Egyptian people and about all Egypt's economic, geographic, and military affairs. It is very regrettable that they go to museums and clubs, walk the popular streets and eat their meals at restaurants as if they were citizens of the country. Like parasites, they ask insolent questions with no conversational ethics or sense of shame whatsoever, fully confident in the knowledge that they are under the protection of [Interior Minister] Zaki Badr, his organs, and intelligence service. They use public transportation and mingle with the people. It is very regrettable that they come from their country on Egyptian means of transportation.

I just wonder, what is the people's role in dealing with these waves who come to us like the yellow fever or the plague, carrying the AIDS virus and indulging their basest desires under the very eyes of the innocent and chaste Egyptian people who endure this affliction of our time? Do Egyptian and Muslim traders not know that these people killed their children, brothers, and fathers in past wars, and would do so in future wars—yet they still greet and welcome them, and trade with them as if they are not beasts of a human jungle who have planted terror in a peaceful region which has now suffered the worst at their hands?

Are no tourist guides willing to refuse to be guides to these debaucherers who mock our country, its poverty, and its dirty streets? Could they not be passive strugglers and feign illness and fail to turn up when they know that their job is to guide these dirty pigs. We do not say dogs because a dog is loving and faithful to those who treat him well.

Where is the role of the Egyptian people, who once boycotted the British and their goods when Britain was a great empire? U.S.-zionist imperialism has indeed successfully applied the slogan we had not known here in Egypt, except at the hands of those regimes which recently afflicted the Arab East, that slogan being "starve your dog and he will follow you." They starved our people and then did us the favor of giving us their rotten crop surpluses from their stores and fields. Instead of throwing them into the sea, they sent their leftovers to the hungry people of the world of colonies as an act of charity. Does hunger make us forget our shari'a and our ethics? Our Koran tells us that the Jews are more hostile to us than the infidels and the imperialists.

If it were not for the rays of light that come through the darkness, the outside world would have thought that the Egyptian people have lost their senses and are about to experience the same kind of loss which, the holy books tell us, once plagued the people of Israel. I refer to the flashes of light in the skies of Egypt brought on by what hero Sulayman Khatir and Egypt's revolution did, and by what has been said by the opposition press and the free commentators in the government's press, once upon a time a true representative of the Egyptian people but which now brainwashes the people day and night to make them forget the facts of history and to plunge them into fabricated imaginary battles, having abominably sunk into a deep abyss on the case of Dr Ahmad Qadri [former chief of Egyptian antiquities department] whom they have praised so much that some even suggested that a statue of him be erected at the Saladin citadel gate with the inscription "Built by Saladin and renewed by Ahmad Qadri." Damn hypocrisy and hypocrites.

O writers and journalists, fear God for your homeland and for your history. Egyptian people, your role is passive resistance against your country's enemies. May God protect Egypt.

'Abd al-Majid Welcomes Shultz' Palestinian Talks

NC271232 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1142 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 27 Mar (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has described U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' meeting with two Palestinians [Dr Edward Sa'id and Dr Ibrahim Abu Lughud] yesterday as a constructive and positive step in the right direction.

'Abd al-Majid called for a direct dialogue between the United States and the Palestinians to promote the peace process. He said that Egypt encourages this approach, which aims at arriving at a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian issue and the Middle East problem.

In a statement today, 'Abd al-Majid said that Egypt welcomes Shultz' upcoming tour which begins next week. He expressed the hope that this tour will push forward the peace process and the efforts to reach a quick and just solution of the Middle East problem.

'Abd al-Majid Confers With PNC's Sa'id Kamal

NC261605 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with PNC member Sa'id Kamal today. The two officials reviewed recent developments in the Arab world and the outcome of the ICO foreign ministers meeting in Amman.

Commenting on the news of a forthcoming meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and PLO representatives, Kamal said that President Muhammad Husni Mubarak had urged the U.S. Administration to hold talks with the Palestinians to familiarize itself with their views. Kamal said that the U.S. secretary of state will confer with PNC members Edward Sa'id and Ibrahim Abu Lughud, who will convey to him the Palestinian views. These views had been relayed to the UK, French, PRC, and USSR foreign ministers; and they stress the need to find a just solution for the Palestinian issue.

PLO Envoy Denounces Threats to Saudi Arabia

NC262030 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1946 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 26 Mar (MENA)—Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative and PLO charge d'affaires in Cairo, has stated that the Israeli threat against Saudi Arabia is part of the unruly Israeli behavior in the Arab region which did not meet with any deterrence after the strike against the Iraqi nuclear reactor, the invasion of Lebanon, and the attack on the PLO headquarters in Tunis.

In a statement tonight, Al-Qidrah ascribed the continued Israeli acts of aggression in the occupied Arab territories to the divided Arab position and the lack of consensus on a unified pan-Arab strategy.

He added that the Israeli threat to Saudi Arabia proves yet again that the entire pan-Arab security is primarily linked with Arab security in Palestine. He noted that during the invasion of Lebanon, then Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon stated that Israeli strategy in the 1980's requires that the Israeli zone of security extend from central Asia to central Africa, specifically from Pakistan in the East to Morocco in the West.

Al-Qidrah declared that any aggression against Saudi Arabia would be considered an aggression against the entire Arab nation and a flagrant violation of pan-Arab security. He asserted that the PLO will support Saudi Arabia against any Israeli threat or belligerent behavior.

Jordanian House Speaker Departs 24 March

NC241748 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1709 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—'Akif al-Fayiz, speaker of Jordan's House of Representatives, left Cairo this afternoon following a 3-day visit. While here, the Jordanian official was received by President Husni Mubarak. [passage omitted]

Trade Unions To 'Boycott' Tripoli Meeting

NC250650 Cairo MENA in English 1905 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 24 (MENA)—The Kenyan Trade Union Federation will boycott meetings of the eleventh session of the Congress of the Organisation of African Trade Unions Unity to be held in Tripoli, Libya, on April 12-14. A decision to this effect was taken by the federation's executive council.

Josef Mougala, chairman of the Kenyan Trade Union Federation, now visiting Cairo at the head of a delegation from his federation, said that the council took that decision in protest against what he termed as the sabotaging role Libya has been playing in Kenya.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian Federation of Trade Unions had also taken a decision to boycott these meetings.

Libya

Forces Will Be Withdrawn From Egyptian Border

LD281210 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1046 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Speech by Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at the Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir Air Base in Tobruk, at a rally marking the 18th anniversary of the evacuation of British troops from the base—live]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] I want to affirm to the Egyptian people and the Egyptian Army that the Libyan Eastern Military Zone will be abolished. There will not be any Libyan military concentrations facing the Egyptian Army, the Egyptian people, or the Egyptian land, because they are our own army, people, and land.

And if Egypt wants to verify this, it will be able to observe; we accept any verification commission, observer, or monitor who wishes to satisfy himself that this region has been completely evacuated by military forces.

But it must be understood that there is absolutely no sense in the presence of Libyan military forces at the Egyptian border; it is not our intention to change Egypt by force, to force it to leave the Camp David stables by force, or to return it to the Arab ranks, which it had abandoned, by force.

So long as the Libyans have no intention of occupying Egyptian Arab land, or changing the Egyptian regime by force, or forcing Egypt to break its shameful and damaging ties with the Israeli enemy—we do not think about breaking its ties by force—what is the point of the presence of forces and military concentrations in the direction of Egypt?

This is illogical and unacceptable. We have other confrontations against imperialism, led by the United States, and we will have to fight for the liberation of Palestine.

We have no effort or time to waste in dispersing these forces in fronts that do not make sense. A war between Libya and Egypt is unacceptable and does not make sense, and therefore it is neither acceptable nor reasonable to mass military forces on a front where even its presence is illogical.

The battlefront is Palestine [chants of "Allahu Akbar" and "Palestine is Arab"] and the battlefront is the Gulf of Sidra, the line of death, parallel 32 degrees, 30 minutes.

Confrontation also remains with the imperialist forces that threaten the Arab homeland and this Jamahiriyah.

But there is no Arab-Arab military confrontation, at least in the foreseeable future. Therefore, all Libyan military forces will be withdrawn from the Egyptian border and the Eastern Military Zone, without us asking for anything in return from the Egyptian side. [passage omitted]

Statement Denies Massing Troops on Chad Border

LD261544 Tripoli JANA in English 1447 GMT 26 Mar 88

["A Statement by a Source at the People's Committee for the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau"—JANA headline]

[Text] Tripoli, Marrikh [March] 25, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Political and press sources of the authority of the capital in Ndjamena has recently persisted in repeating a series of lies and fabricated claims on the massing of Libyan troops on the borders with Chad and the readiness of Great Jamahiriyah for attack on it.

Reasserting the stance of Great Jamahiriyah of which it informed the chairman of the OAU and the president of the OAU Good Offices Committee and the secretary general of the OAU, the People's Committee of the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau affirms the following:

First: The denial of Great Jamahiriyah of lies and claims fabricated and promoted by Ndjamena with the coverage of French news media concerning the alleged military preparation by Great Jamahiriyah on Chad.

Second: Its unequivocal denial, on the other hand, of the claims spread by these sources on the Libyan Air Force conduct of reconnaissance deep inside the Chadian territory.

Third: Great Jamahiriyah reiterates that what it does on its borders and from within its territory is not subject of permission from anyone and is part of the exercise of its sovereignty on its territory and requirements of the protection of its borders.

Libyan Commander in Chad Joins Opposition

WA251827 Paris AFP in English 1810 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] London, March 25 (AFP) — The commander of Libyan forces in Chad, Colonel Khalifah Bilqasim Haftar, has defected to the principal Libyan opposition group, the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), a Front communique said here Friday.

Col. Haftar announced his decision Friday on the Front's radio station, the Voice of the Libyan People. He is committed to overthrowing the "terrorist and tyrannical" regime of Colonel Mu'ammar Qadhdhafi, the communique said.

According to Col. Haftar, hundreds of Libyan officers and soldiers captured by Chadian forces in fighting between Chad and Libya are prepared to fight "for the removal of (Colonel) Qadhdhafi from power and the establishment of a national constitutional rule in a free Libya".

Col. Haftar, 45, took part in the 1969 coup which overthrew the Libyan monarchy. He was named commander of the Libyan Armed Forces in Chad in 1980-81 and again in 1986.

Since 1973 Libya has been engaged in a territorial dispute with Chad over the Aozou Strip, in northern Chad, which it claims under the terms of an unratified 1935 treaty between Italy and France, the former colonial powers.

The NFSL, formed in 1981 and based in Sudan, is led by Muhammad Yusif Maqaryaf.

DFLP's Hawatimah Arrives, Makes Statement

LD251816 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Tripoli, 25 Mar (JANA)—Today at noon, Brother Nayif Hawatimah, DFLP secretary general, arrived in Tripoli on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

In a statement to JANA, Brother Nayif Hawatimah said:

I am visiting the Jamahiriyah, the land of all Arabs and the pan-Arab position of confronting the imperialist and Zionist enemies of the Arab nation, to discuss the means of supporting the popular uprising led by the generation of anger in occupied Palestine. [passage omitted]

About the decision of the U.S. Administration to close the PLO's New York offices, he said that an absolute majority of the United Nations has rejected this arbitrary decision and condemned it, because it contradicts the spirit of the headquarters agreement.

Concluding his statement, Brother Nayif Hawatimah called on the Arab countries to adopt a united stance in reconsidering their relations with the imperialist United States and its allies, who are hostile to the rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

He also called on the masses of the Arab nation to support the uprising to ensure its continuity until the liberation of all the Palestinian territories.

Jabir Sees PFLP's Habash, Lebanon's Hawi

LD270839 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 0215 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, has received Dr George Habash, PFLP secretary general, and George Hawi, secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Party.

The meeting was attended by Brother Taysir Qub'ah, member of the PFLP Political Bureau.

Tunisia

Mestiri Backs Saudis Against Israeli 'Threats'

LD261022 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0928 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Jeddah, 26 Mar (SPA)—His Excellency Tunisian Foreign Affairs Minister Mahmoud Mestiri has reaffirmed Tunisia's solidarity with the Kingdom in confronting Israeli threats.

In a statement to AL-MADINAH published today, Mestiri declared that Tunisia stands together with the Kingdom in all situations, especially this one, where Islamic holy places are being subjected to flagrant threats by the Israeli enemy.

Mestiri added that Tunisia, with all its heart and soul and with all its means, stands by the fraternal Kingdom.

The Tunisian foreign minister pointed out that the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers that ended yesterday in the Jordanian capital clearly expressed our views: that we are committed to safeguarding and defending the Kingdom and its Islamic holy places against all threats. But Tunisia, in addition to that, has special sentiments vis-a-vis the Kingdom and, therefore, supports it without limit.

Intra-Gulf Affairs

Indian Tanker Attacked by Iranian Gunboats

BK271250 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] An Indian tanker has been hit by Iranian gunboats in the south southern Gulf. Shipping sources says the 24,529 ton "Jaynarayan Vyas" tanker was raked with machinegun fire off the coast of the United Arab Emirates; it caused a fire on board.

The engine room was damaged and one crewman was believed to be hurt. Fire fighting tugs are speeding to aid the ship. The "Jaynarayan Vyas" is the seventh neutral vessel attacked by Iran over the past week in retaliation for Iraqi attacks on its oil lifeline.

The Indian tanker was on its way to the Saudi port of Jubayl.

More on Gunboat Attack

BK271555 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] An Indian tanker has been hit by Iranian gunboats in the southern Gulf. Shipping sources say that 24,529 ton "Jaynarayan Vyas" tanker was raked with machinegun fire off the coast of the United Arab Emirates today.

The engine room of the ship caught fire. It was later put out by fire fighting tugs. One injured crewman is being shifted to Dubayy.

A Danish supertanker sent out an emergency distress call for the Indian ship.

The "Jaynarayan Vyas" is the seventh neutral vessel attacked by Iran over the past week in retaliation for Iraqi attacks on its oil lifeline.

The tanker, owned by the Shipping Corporation of India, was on its way to the Saudi Arabian port of Jubayl

Iranian Gunboats Hit Liberian Tanker in Gulf

NC281403 Paris AFP in English 1329 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Manama, March 28 (AFP)—Iranian gunboats attacked and set ablaze two supertankers Monday in the southern Gulf, including a Liberian vessel hit at dockside in a United Arab Emirates (UAE) port, regional shipping and insurance sources said.

One of the oil tanks of the 219,287-ton Golar Kansai burst into flame when it was attacked at noon, but there were no injuries, Lloyd's of London reported.

The insurer did not identify the port where the ship was moored but supplied coordinates placing it along the UAE coast near the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz.

The Golar Kansai, registered in Liberia and owned by Bermuda-based Gotass-Larsen Shipping, was the second tanker attacked by Iranian gunboats in less than three hours. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Foreign Minister on Ties With Saudi Arabia

LD261245 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1212 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Text] Kuwait, 26 Mar (KUNA)—Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir has declared that relations between Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia within the framework of the GCC are relations of cohesiveness and destiny and are better than any statement or comment could express.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad was answering a question by newsmen on the position of Kuwait to the Israeli threats to strike at the sites of the Chinese missiles recently acquired by Saudi Arabia.

The GCC charter is declared and quite clear, he said, and it states that any aggression against any GCC member state is seen as aggression against all GCC member states.

Asked if this question would be discussed at an emergency meeting of the GCC foreign ministers, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said that it is up to the brethren in the Kingdom to make a decision on this matter. In the event of a call for such a meeting, no doubt all the brothers would take part.

Cabinet Backs Saudi Arabia Over PRC Missiles

LD271400 Kuwait KUNA in English 1301 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, March 27 (KUNA)—Kuwait has reiterated support for Saudi Arabia in fostering its defensive capabilities, demanded the United States to retract its decision closing the PLO observer office to the U.N. and welcomed the outcome of the 17th ICO foreign ministers conference in Amman last Friday.

The concern of Kuwait was voiced here Sunday during the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers which discussed the three issues at length, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Rashid 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rashid said after the meeting.

The Council of Ministers started off by reaffirming Kuwait's support for Saudi Arabia against the Israeli threats to knock down the Chinese-made missiles the Kingdom has acquired to enhance its defensive capabilities.

The ministers voiced strong denunciation and condemnation of the irresponsible Israeli threats which pose a challenge to peace in the Middle East and there urged peace-loving forces to deter the Israeli arrogance in the interest of maintaining world peace.

Kuwait renews support for Saudi Arabia out of historic ties and in fulfillment of the objectives of the Gulf Cooperation Council and in demonstration of the natural cohesion of among Arab brothers, Al-Rashid said.

The Cabinet expressed deep appreciation for the General Assembly resolution favouring continued operation of the PLO Observer Office to the United Nations and the friendly nations that supported the vote and demanded the United States to revise its stance towards the issue and adhere to the headquarters agreement in that respect.

Al-Rashid said that after listening to a report by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sa'ud Muhammad al-'Usaymi on the just concluded OIC foreign ministers conference in Amman, the Council welcomed the results of the 5-day conference calling for its speedy implementation and appealing to the Almighty to fulfill the aspirations and ambitions of the Muslims.

Oman

Jordan's King Husayn Arrives From Pakistan

JN251825 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur arrived in Oman today from Islamabad at the end of their 4-day visit to Pakistan. Their majesties were received upon arrival at Salalah Airport by Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id and highranking Omani officials.

Their majesties were accompanied by the prime minister, the court minister, the chief chamberlain, and the commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

Their majesties were seen off at Islamabad airport by Pakistani President Mohammad Ziaul Haq, the Pakistani premier, highranking Pakistani officials, Jordan's ambassador in Pakistan, and the embassy staff.

Meanwhile, his majesty the king sent a cable to the Pakistani president thanking him for the warm welcome accorded to his majesty and the accompanying delegation during the visit.

Holds Talks With Sultan Qabus

JN261401 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id and his brother His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal, monarch of the sisterly Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, held a closed meeting at noon today at the Al-Husn al-'Amir palace in Salalah.

The two great leaders reviewed developments in current Arab issues, international issues, issues of mutual concern, and the distinguished bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries.

His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal arrived in the country last night on a 2-day private visit to his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id.

He is accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Nur and a number of senior officials of fraternal Jordan.

PDRY

Protocol on Oil Signed With Soviet Union

EA261727 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Official talks between Democratic Yemen and the friendly Soviet Union ended this morning at the Ministry of Energy and Minerals with the signing of a protocol on bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries on the joint development, production, and transportation of oil in Shabwah Governorate.

In the course of the talks, Brother Salih Abu Bakr ibn Husaynun, member of the Central Committee, deputy prime minister, and minister of energy and minerals, expressed deep appreciation for what was achieved in this field.

He said that in the past few days the necessary arrangements and practical programs had been drawn up for the immediate commencement of development operations in the discovered oilfields and the establishment of the pipeline.

He said these operations constituted an important step on the road of the developing relations between the two friendly parties and peoples and represented a reaffirmation of the depth and cohesion of the friendship and cooperation between our country and the Soviet Union.

He stressed that the operations to be implemented would be presented as a gift on the occasion of the celebrations by the masses of our Yemeni people of the silver jubilee of the glorious 14 October Revolution and the jubilee celebrations of the founding of the YSP.

For their part, Comrade Dinkov, Soviet minister of petroleum industry, and Chirskov, minister of construction of petroleum and gas industry enterprises, affirmed the two ministries' eagerness to implement the directives of the Soviet leadership on expediting the development of the exploitation of the oil resources to consolidate the economy of Democratic Yemen.

They explained that the operations agreed upon would be implemented as soon as possible and with minimal cost under with the program and protocols signed by the two sides.

Saudi Arabia

Kingdom Grateful for Egypt's Stand on Missiles

NC262135 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
2100 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed its appreciation and gratitude for the message sent by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak to U.S. President Ronald Reagan urging him to persuade Israel to stop its irresponsible threats to Arab countries and emphasizing his rejection of the Israeli threat to launch an attack against the missiles Saudi Arabia recently obtained from China to strengthen its defense capability.

Prince Bandar ibn Sultan, Saudi ambassador to the United States, noted the profound effect President Mubarak's message had on senior White House officials and U.S. congressmen.

During a meeting yesterday with Egyptian Ambassador to Washington 'Abd al-Ra'uf, the Saudi ambassador asserted that President Mubarak's message was what prompted the U.S. President to state yesterday that his administration had asked Israel not to carry out any action against Saudi Arabia.

Editorial Views Purchase of PRC Missiles

PM281039 Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic
21 Mar 88 pp 1,13

[Editorial: "Kingdom and Intrinsic Power Via Free Decisionmaking"]

[Text] The Kingdom, via the missiles deal, has emphasized that it is exercising its natural right to secure sources of arms that meet its requirements, namely, by exercising free decisionmaking.

The problem is not to do with the Kingdom obtaining arms from China, since the Iraqi nuclear reactor was hit amid huge international joy at the clipping of the Arabs' claws.

And Israel had tried to conclude a deal with India to destroy the Pakistani nuclear reactor on the pretext that the Pakistani bomb versus the Israeli bomb constitute a strategic threat to the enemy.

This means that the objective is to make Arab weakness a general rule in the region. The Saudi deal is aimed at securing power to defend truth.

Since the Kingdom has never been the leader of any terrorist movement or sparked off a military situation, it realizes that increasing its reserves in terms of various types of weapons is dictated by the potential threat to its security from any foreign party.

The other and most important fact is the question of an arms monopoly exposing the region to storms. This has become an international trade—a matter that is no longer acceptable, since this divides up the map of the region and makes it a prisoner of harsh pressures and surrounds it with numerous threats.

The Kingdom based its vision on this, since its security cannot be subjected to bargaining.

And when we say we have never been party to any conflict or tension, this does not mean that accepting negative nonalignment toward the threats surrounding us would mean absolute safety.

It is nonalignment with strength which will grant any state control over its national sovereignty and make it an intrinsic power. No one can deny the Kingdom such a will so long as it is a natural reserve aimed at repulsing any threat.

The Kingdom, which has clearly declared that it is free to search for any source of strength, had previously concluded numerous deals with the United States and several European states.

And it is no longer a secret that it has the right to deal with any party in view of the quality, advanced nature, and suitability of the arms that party produces.

With regard to alleged threats, the Kingdom has never been party to any. Its international record emphasizes this. But it was the comprehensive situation in the region as well as dealings with one party only which turned the region into a huge arms dump.

All these conditions have been imposed on all Arab states, including their implication in the Iraq-Iran war and the undermining of Arab security by Israel's strength. The attempt to detonate more than one mine field on Arab territory has become an international trade, selling and buying Arab security.

Despite all this, the Kingdom has not risked threats made by any party. But it does not claim it is free from threats from other enemies. That is why the Kingdom cannot be lenient when it comes to a national cause which, it feels, is the foundation for its continuity and existence as well as for the Saudi citizen's protection from the increasing dangers threatening the security and stability of many peoples in the region.

This citizen has never been a party to any hostile contradictions, in contrast to Israeli immigrants to the region. Moreover he is not a terrorist dealing on the black market for arms, in contrast to those hateful racists in Iran who are forcing their citizens to dictate weaknesses while the prestige of the state deteriorates. [sentence as published]

The Saudi citizen enjoys unique independence: While his leadership purchases some Chinese arms, it is at the same time developing trade with Washington's markets.

Command Councils View ICO Meeting, War

JN261444 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1405 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn chaired a joint meeting of the RCC and the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command this morning.

The meeting dealt with the results achieved by the ICO foreign ministers' conference which was held in Amman. The RCC and the Regional Command voiced their appreciation for the resolutions adopted by the conference on the uprising being staged by the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories, and the crimes perpetrated by the Iranian regime's henchmen during the pilgrimage season in holy Mecca.

The RCC and the Regional Command also expressed their appreciation of the resolution adopted by the conference on the Iranian aggression against Iraq—a resolution which represents the Islamic states support for the course taken by the Amman summit resolutions and which highlights the Iranian regime's isolation from the Islamic world. All the facts pertaining to the Iranian regime's aggressiveness, its deviation from the tenets of the true religion, and its indifference to Islamic solidarity and the interests of Islamic states have been unveiled before the eyes of the Islamic world.

The meeting also tackled the threats voiced by the Zionist enemy against fraternal Saudi Arabia, due to its acquisition of defensive long-range missiles. The RCC and the Regional Command affirmed Iraq's full support for fraternal Saudi Arabia, the target of these insolent threats. The RCC and the Regional Command reiterated that the Zionist entity must know quite well that any aggression perpetrated against any Arab state is tantamount to an aggression against the entire Arab nation, and that there are mutual commitments binding Arab states in accordance with the Arab Defense Pact, not to mention the principled obligations dictated by pan-Arab principles and the requirements of the common Arab destiny.

The RCC and the Regional Command warned the Zionist entity's allies against encouraging it to play its aggressive role, that of a rabid guard dog that seeks to impose its will on the region's states. The RCC and the Regional Command also warned that 1988 differs from 1981, when the Zionist entity carried out an aggression against the July nuclear reactor which was designed for peaceful purposes, and that the Arab nation now possesses the means that enable it to deter any aggression.

The RCC and the Regional Command strongly denounced the statements made by the Zionist entity on the use of so-called chemical weapons. They stressed that these statements provide additional proof of the alliance between the Zionsit entity and the Iranian regime—two regimes which pose threats to pan-Arab security and hatch a joint conspiracy against the Arab entity.

The RCC and the Regional Command pointed out that the enemies of the Arab nation connive with these two regimes to prevent the Arab nation from possessing means of strength and force that enable it to defend itself and protect its security and sovereignty. The established facts regarding confrontation of the Zionist entity and the Iranian regime prove that all the Arab nation's weapons were used and are being used for self-defense and for achieving a just peace, while the weapons in the possession of the Zionist entity and the Iranian regime, including chemical and nuclear weapons, are being used for aggression, expansion, and destruction, and for threatening security and stability in the region.

The RCC and the Regional Command were acquainted with the political and information reports regarding recent developments in Iranian aggression against Iraq, and the statements that were made by the UN secretary general and some states and circles regarding the use of so-called chemical weapons.

The RCC and the Regional Command stressed that throughout 8 years Iraq has adopted a firm and principled stand, since the beginning of the Iranian aggression, when it gave tangible proof that it respects the UN Charter, international law, and all of its clauses and chapters. However, the Iranian regime has violated the UN Charter and all chapters and clauses of international law, and has dealt with the United Nations and its institutions with disdain.

It has dealt with the UN Security Council states and most of the members of the international community in the same manner. What raises suspicion is that some statements are being made to cover these facts, and to ignore that Iran rejects peace and insists on continuing the war and destruction. These statements also ignore that Iran has recently carried out a new aggression against Iraq and has occupied an Iraqi city and new Iraqi territory, in full view of the UN Security Council and the UN secretary general, and 8 months after the binding UN Security Council Resolution 598 was issued.

These stands are neither fair nor credible. This emphasis on parts of the international conventions and obligations, and choosing to ignore that they must be observed as an integrated whole, since they were agreed upon by the international community with the basic objective of achieving peace and inducing respect for sovereignty, does not serve the real objectives enshrined in the UN Charter and the provisions of international law. No, such an approach encourages the aggressors and those bent on expansion, such as the Tehran rulers, to persist in their policies and to pursue a policy of blackmail.

They must understand that Iraq—which has proved its genuine desire for peace, respects the principles of sovereignty and noninterference in other state's internal affairs, and which accepted the principle of bringing about a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, as envisaged in the UN Security Council Resolutions, particularly Resolution No 598—cannot face the Iranian aggression and the waves of barbaric invasion, which seek to exterminate Iraq and kill its sons with its hands tied.

Iraq is firmly determined to use all of the capabilities at its disposal to exterminate the aggressive invaders. Iraq also strongly denounces all of the recent tendentious statements and communiques regardless of their sources, as these statements and communiques cover up for the Iranian aggression and encourage the murderous Iranian rulers, who have been deviating from the tenets and principles governing the international community, to persist in their aggression and apathy. The sources of these statements and communiques ignore the crimes that have been perpetrated by the Iranian regime—the crimes that have been matched by none according to the annals of history.

They fail to say anything about Iran's failure to disclose anything regarding the fate of 20,000 Iraqi prisoners of war. Iran's killing of prisoners and burying them alive, and Iran's killing of prisoners while they were kept in jails. They also ignore the fact of the Iranian regime's responsibility for igniting the cities war and shelling schools, hospitals, houses, and places of worship.

The sides that made statements during the past years, particularly during the past months, did not react to the Iranian regime's premeditated crimes and remained silent. These sides continued to justify the Iranian regime's circumvention of UN Security Council Resolution 598 and its refusal to respond to its binding clauses.

Regardless of details, Iraq announces to the world that it cannot stand idle before the barbaric invaders that aim to occupy its territory, enslave its people, and destroy its deep-rooted civilization. Iraq is strongly determined to defend itself by all means available. The aggressor and criminal Tehran rulers must know that Iraq's steel fist will continue to strike at them as long as they insist on continuing the war and aggression. If the international community and institutions really believe in principles and charters, then they should work to achieve peace and not cover the criminals and raise slogans to achieve dishonest purposes.

The UN Charter and international law are an indivisible whole. Indifference to the UN Charter and all the clauses and chapters of international law, and focusing only on a single part of these chapters, is rejected. The point is either to show commitment to all chapters and clauses, accept peace, and respect sovereignty, or the threatened states will find themselves compelled to use all means available to defend themselves. All experiments throughout the history of mankind stress peoples' right to defend their security, sovereignty, and right to live.

Perez de Cuellar's Statement on Gas 'Biased'

JN271406 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1310 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Mar (WAKH)—An Iraqi official has described the statement issued by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar several days ago, which accused Iraq of using chemical gas, as biased.

In a statement to a WAKH correspondent in Baghdad, Nizar Hamdun, Iraqi Foreign Ministry under secretary, said that the statement ignores the important fact that Iran is occupying an Iraqi city, despite the Security Council's binding resolution calling for a peaceful and comprehensive solution.

Iraq announced yesterday that it could not sit back with folded arms in view of the brutal invaders. A statement issued after a joint meeting of the RCC and the Ba'th Party Regional Command under President Saddam Husayn says that Iraq is determined to defend itself with all available means.

Hamdun also said that the UN secretary general's statement reflects the failure of the UN secretary general and some Security Council members to confront Iran's intransigence and to punish Iran for refusing to implement Security Council Resolution No 598, which expresses the consensus of the international community.

Hamdun added that the UN secretary general should not forget Iran's decision to continue the war and its rejection of all the peace efforts.

The Iraqi statement which was issued yesterday describes the UN secretary general's position on the so-called usage of chemical weapons as unjust and incredible, adding that concentration on only one party does not serve the real objectives of the UN Charter and international law.

Hamdun ended his statement by saying that ending the war and dealing with the scandals of the war should be a main priority. He added: Regrettably, the UN secretary general's statement provides the necessary cover for Iran's continuation of the war.

Paper Defends Use of 'All Kinds' of Weapons

JN281158 Baghdad INA in English 1100 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, March 28, INA—Commenting on statements made by some circles on what they termed "use of chemical weapons", AL-THAWRAH daily today said angrily Iraq would not receive the invader with flowers.

The paper, organ of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, noted that Iraq is determined to defend its land, people and sanctities with all means and by using all kinds of weapons in its possession.

It added that so long as the rulers of Iran continued to have greedy intentions and sinister goals against Iraq, the latter would go on using its iron fist to break heads of the criminal rulers of Iran.

Stressing that Iran's persistence in war is the main question that the international community has to focus on, AL-THAWRAH remarked that international efforts and endeavours ought to centre at essence of the issue and work on ending the war and establishing peace.

AL-THAWRAH described insidious statements by some international circles and parties as an attempt to cover up crux of the issue, namely: Ongoing Iranian aggression against Iraq. Those statements, the paper added, are flagrantly encouraging Tehran regime to carry on its derision and defiance of the international will represented by Security Council Resolution No. 598.

The daily expressed astonishment that those statements and releases came at a time when Iran dared to mount a fresh aggression on Iraq, occupied a town and seized further Iraqi land, what is worst, the paper commented is that these circles are trying to provide coverage to a fresh Iranian offensive on Iraq, by talking about Geneva Convention and rules of international law, forgetting that these conventions and rules prohibited not only use of this or that weapon, but prohibited so strongly as well occupation of others' land by force, killing of prisoners of war (POWs) and concealing information about them.

Khomeyni's Iran had been aggressing upon Iraq for eight years, it was still refusing all peace overtures and international solutions calling for ending the war and establishing comprehensive, just peace between two parties to the conflict, AL-THAWRAH pointed out, adding that it was Iran that occupied Iraqi cities, killed (POWs) or buried them alive, it was Iran that had been missiling Baghdad and bombarding purely residential districts in Iraqi towns and it was Iran that had been using children to explode mine fields.

The daily wondered: Does international law permit all those acts? Over the past eight years, the paper noted, Iraq adhered to Charter of the United Nations and to international law, applauded all resolutions adopted by the Security Council and all initiatives sought to end the war, thus, demonstrating a serious desire to achieve an all-round peace. Iraq could not stand hand-folded vis-a-vis the Iranian aggression, AL-THAWRAH reiterated, noting Iraq is entitled to defend its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Shelling of Basra Continues

JN251610 Baghdad INA in English 1510 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Basra, southern Iraq, March 25, INA—Two sisters, Milad Husayn 'Awwad aged 18 months and Zaynab a 4-year-old, were among Iraqi civilians wounded by criminal Iranian shelling of residential quarters in Basra this morning.

The shelling by long-range artillery and rocket launchers continued throughout last night and today and was aimed at densely populated areas in this steadfast Iraqi port city.

Communique Details Air Strikes

JN251713 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1601 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,096 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 25 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our heroic Air Force is Iraq's everlasting unleashed sword against unjust tyrants. It carries out memorable assaults out on the dens of tyranny and filth. Our heroic Air Force had carried out 343 missions at the time this communique was prepared.

Through these missions, our Air Force dropped 297,000 kg of highly explosive material on the enemy scoundrels in the I Army Corps sector alone. It inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy scoundrels and demolished 296 positions over the scoundrels, sent by Khomeyni to the crematorium of death on our lofty border. Our brave planes also managed to destroy and set ablaze 251 various vehicles and 76 caravans [preceding word in English] along with their scoundrel occupants. In addition, the following was achieved:

1. Two large maritime targets were destroyed near the Iranian coast yesterday by our brave hawks.

2. At 0713 [0413 GMT] this morning, a destructive blow was dealt with a surface-to-air missile battery of the Hawk type.

3. At 0930 this morning, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Hamadan.

4. At the same time, a number of our planes dealt a destructive raid on the city of Kermanshah [Bakhtaran].

5. At 1100 today, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Shushtar.

6. At 1245 today, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Mond Ab.

7. At 1405 today, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Malayer.

They are indeed painful blows for our country's enemies. They are certainly lethal for the regime of charlatans which suffers daily from this fatal Iraqi rage as a result of the insistence of the Khomeyniites, the slaves of Zionists, on war and aggression. O men of our heroic Air Force, you have been and will remain the best unleashed swords in the face of falsehood and the best lethal bombs on the heads of anti-Arab liars, the advocates of sedition and destruction. May God grant you success—command, hawks, officers, and other ranks. Proceed ahead for fresh successes. We derive success and support from God.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 25 March 1988

Communique No 3,097

JN251816 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1706 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,097 issued by the the Armed Forces General Command on 25 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our heroic forces continued their combat activities, inflicting further losses on the aggressors. The results of these activities for last night and today were as follows:

1. With high capability and resolute attacks, the noble knights of the helicopter gunships ran 184 combat missions, through which they managed to inflict on the aggressors large losses in scoundrels, weapons, and equipment. Then, they returned with their planes safely protected by God. May God bless the brave knights of the helicopter gunships. Praise be to God for this victory.

2. No matter what the criminal Iranian regime tries to do, whichever course it resorts to, and whatever means it seeks to confront lofty Iraq, it will face frustration and defeat at the hands of the courageous men of Iraq. Four enemy aircraft tried to violate our international borders over the I Army Corps northern sector. All four aircraft were shot down inside our international borers as follows:

a. At 1020 [0720 GMT], the first aircraft, an F-5, was shot down.

b. At 1042, the second aircraft, also an F-5, was shot down inside our international borders.

c. At 1114, the third aircraft, also an F-5, was shot down.

d. At 1137, the fourth aircraft, also an F-5, was shot down.

All of these aircraft were shot down by the heroic men of the I Army Corps ground defenses.

At 1059, while our Air Force aircraft were wiping out the enemy remnants, they sighted four helicopters on the ground. The hawks fired their missiles at them, destroying them all.

May God bless the brave men of our ground defenses and the hero hawks of the air. We thank God for this great victory.

3. In the I Army Corps northern sector, 109 of the scoundrels were killed and others injured. A number of infantry positions were destroyed, one vehicle was set ablaze and destroyed, another was damaged, and one ammunition dump was blown up.

4. Three enemy personnel were killed and six various positions were destroyed in the II Army Corps central sector.

5. One enemy single-barrelled machinegun was destroyed in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah.

6. In the VII Army Corps sector, seven enemy personnel were killed and one machinegun emplacement was destroyed.

7. Ten enemy boats attempted to approach the Al-'Amiq port last night. They were confronted by the port's valiant force and forced to flee.

8. At 2059 last night, the criminal Iranian regime fired one of its missiles on the city of Baghdad. It fell on a residential area, martyring four civilians, wounding nine others, and damaging three houses.

The scoundrel Khomeyniites shelled the residential districts in the cities of Basrah, Al-Zubayr, Al-Qurnah, Al-Dayr, and Darband Khan with long-range artillery. The enemy shelling injured seven civilians, including four children and two women. It also damaged a preparatory school, one mosque, and a number of houses in Basrah. It martyred two civilians and injured another, and damaged a hospital and a number of houses and shops in the city of Al-Qurnah.

The shelling injured one citizen in the city of Al-Dayr. It martyred seven civilians, including one child and one woman; injured eight others, including one woman and one child; and damaged a number of houses, shops, and civilian cars in the city of Darband Khan. The shelling martyred one woman and injured five other civilians, including two women and one child, in the city of Al-Zubayr.

Mercy to our martyrs and a speedy recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 25 March 1988

8 Downings Denied, 1 Admitted

JN251920 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1906 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—Iraq has denied Iranian allegations on the downing of eight Iraqi planes.

In a statement to INA this evening, a military spokesman said that the Iraqi planes, which carried out 343 combat missions today, have all returned safely with the exception of one plane that was downed over enemy territory.

42d, 43d Missile Strikes

JN261211 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1142 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 26 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The Iranian regime is sustaining very heavy losses in its scoundrels at our international border—the scoundrels who went to hell, their wretched end. This regime is still receiving devastating blows from our giganitic missile force. At 1400 [1100 GMT] today, the 42d missile strike was launched at the city of Tehran. At 1401 today, the 43d missile strike was launched at Tehran also.

Let the rulers of Tehran know that they will not be saved by their cries, desperate attempts, or the cheap lies with which they feed their propaganda machine. Our response to those who rejected peace and encroached on our cities and border is only death and destruction. We will distribute this to them at any time and in any way we like, so as to destroy their heads, shake their entity, and make of them a lesson to all those who attempt to encroach on Iraq's sovereignty and security.

We will continue to uproot thousands of their scoundrels and demolish their cities over their heads until they realize, no matter how long it takes, that they are defeated and must opt for one of two things: peace or bitter death.

Glorious Iraq will live under the banner of its great leader Saddam Husayn. God bless our men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn missile force. Foreward, until we smash the enemies of our country; God is on our side.

[Dated] 26 March 1988

Communique No 3,098

JN261818 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,098 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 26 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our valiant Armed Forces, which are vindicating right and proudly defending the honor of the dear homeland, continued to carry out their combat activities last night and today:

1. Our heroic Air Force continued to launch destructive raids against the concentrations of the enemy scoundrels and their positions, dropping on them lethal showers of fire in 173 combat missions. The enemy sustained grave losses in personnel, equipment, and weapons as a result of these raids.

At 1105 [0805 GMT] today, our planes carried out a destructive raid against the city of Ilam, pounding their targets there. Having carried out their tasks, our daring planes returned safely to base, God be praised.

2. The courageous knights of the helicopter gunships in the Army helicopter gunship force are doing great things and carrying out great activities in pounding the enemy's positions, destroying its equipment and weapons, and harvesting its scoundrels. Today, they continued to fly heroic combat sorties and inflicted grave losses on the aggressors. They flew 130 combat sorties today. Having flown these sorties they returned safely to base, God be praised. Blessed be the proud men, the audacious knights of the helicopter gunships

3. The miserable enemy tried to dispatch three planes to violate our international borders in the I Army Corps northern sector of operations at different times. The heroic men of the air defenses confronted them and managed to down the first plane at 0859 today. They downed the second plane at 1211 today. At 1212, the third plane was downed. All of the downed planes are of the F-5 type. Thus, the number of the enemy planes that were downed during the past 3 days totals 10. Blessed be the men of our air and ground defenses in the I Army Corps northern sector. God be praised for the victory that he granted us.

4. Twelve enemy boats tried to approach the loading platform at the Al-'Amiq Port yesterday. The men of the valiant port force confronted these boats using various types of weapons. With God's help, three enemy boats were destroyed and sunk with the scoundrels on board. Three other boats were damaged, while the remaining boats fled the scene.

5. Seven enemy personnel were killed, six vehicles and four infantry positions were destroyed, and one ammunition dump was blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector.

6. One 106-mm gun, four observation posts, and three infantry positions were destroyed in the II Army Corps central sector.

7. Two enemy personnel were killed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan.

8. Two infantry positions were destroyed, three scoundrels were killed, and one single-barrelled machinegun was destroyed in the VII Army Corps sector.

9. The criminal Iranian enemy used long-range artillery to shell residential quarters in the cities of Basra, Al-Zubayr, Khanaqin, Qal'at Salih, Al-Majjar, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Darband Khan, and Badrah. The shelling martyred and wounded a number of our dear citizens. A number of women and children were among those martyred and wounded. The shelling also demolished and damaged a number of houses, shops, and civilian vehicles, not to mention the damage to an elementary school and a mosque.

We pray to God to make paradise the abode of our martyrs, and to grant a swift recovery to our wounded. He is the best support who answers prayers.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 26 March 1988

Plane Downing Denied

JN262018 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1910 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi military spokesman has refuted Iranian allegations on the downing of an Iraqi plane today. In a statement tonight, the spokesman said that all the planes that carried out missions returned safely to base, and that the Iranian regime's allegations represent a position characterized by the propagation of lies, and an attempt to cover up the destructive strikes dealt to it by Iraqi aircraft.

Iranian Missile Hits Baghdad

JN270641 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0625 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Statement by a spokesman dated 27 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 0747 [0447 GMT] today, the despotic Iranian rulers fired one of their missiles at the city of Baghdad, the capital of good, progress, and peace. The missile fell on a residential area, martyring or wounding several civilians, including women and children. It also demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and other civilian properties.

May our martyrs rest in paradise and we wish our wounded speedy recovery, God willing.

[Dated] 27 March 1988

Missile Strikes Reported

JN271033 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0950 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,099 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 27 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The criminal Iranian regime insists on war and aggression. It flouts all international norms and laws. It turns away from mankind's values and honorable ethics. It continues on the road toward evil, upon the instructions of Zionism and its entity. In so doing, the Iranian regime is motivated by its cheap designs from which it will achieve nothing, so long as there are men in Iraq who have an unswerving determination and courage.

This regime must continue to meekly suffer in all places and at all times: in the battlefield at the hands of the Iraqi people's heroic Armed Forces, which are dismembering its remnants; in its own house at the hands of the heroic men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn missile force; or at the hands of the brave hawks of the air. Now and in the future, our only reply to the Iranian regime's aggression will be to sow death among the ranks of its rogues, and to destroy the dens of corruption over the heads of those who practice vileness and meanness.

The following missile strikes were carried out today:

1. At 0730 [0430 GMT], the 44th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran, the capital of the charlatans. The strike was dealt with Al-Husayn missiles.

2. At the same time, the 45th strike was dealt against the city of Esfahan with the Al-Husayn missiles.

3. At 0731, the 46th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

4. At the same time, the 47th missile strike was dealt against the city of Esfahan with Al-Husayn missiles.

The Iraqi people and Armed Forces pledge to the victorious and great homeland that they will rub the enemies' noses in the mud of defeat, reduce their cities to rubble, and transform their rogues into ashes. We will uphold the will of peace and justice, and will place the Tehran rulers in a trap of humiliation and defeat from which they cannot escape. God always supports us on the road to great victory. He is the best guide and supporter.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 27 March 1988

Shelling of Cities Continues

JN271127 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1110 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Basra, southern Iraq, 27 Mar (INA)—The Iranian regime continued to shell Basra residential areas with long-range artillery and rocket launchers throughout last night and at dawn today. The INA correspondent says as a result of the Iranian shelling, several civilians, including women and children, were martyred; several houses, shops, cars, and civilian properties were demolished.

The INA correspondent explains that the Iranian shelling was also targeted against Al-Dayr and Al-Qurnah in the Al-Basrah Governorate, and that several civilians were martyred and civilian properties were damaged.

Jets Attack 'Maritime Target'

JN280748 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0739 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—Iraqi jets attacked a maritime target near Lavan Island in the Arabian Gulf yesterday evening. A spokesman for the Armed Forces General Command said that the Iraqi jets, which dealt an accurate, effective blow to the maritime target, returned safely to base.

3 Missiles Fired at Qom

JN281357 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1340 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,101 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 28 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help, the following missile strikes were carried out against the city of Qom, the cradle of Khomeyniite charlatanism, in retaliation for the Khomeyniites' aggressions against our border cities:

1. At 1545 [1245 GMT] today, the 48th missile strike was dealt against the city of Qom with the Al-Husayn missiles.

2. At the same time, the 49th strike was also dealt against the city of Qom.

3. At 1546 today, the 50th missile strike was dealt against the city of Qom.

Blessed be the brave men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn missile force. Go ahead and destroy the dens of the aggressors. God be with us.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 28 March 1988

Planes Raid 4 Iranian Cities

JN281411 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1359 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 28 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The planes of our heroic Air Force continued to inflitrate into the enemy's territory today in order to carry out the following missions:

1. At 1000 [0700 GMT] today, our planes raided the city of Kuhdasht.

2. At 1019 today, our planes raided the city of Ilam.

3. At 1044 today, our planes raided the city of Dezful.

4. At 1300 today, our planes raided the city of Borujerd.

After destroying the dens of the aggressors, our planes returned safely to base, in God's care.

[Dated] 28 March 1988

Vanunu Sentenced to 18 Years Imprisonment

TA271112 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Mordekhay Vanunu has been sentenced by the Jerusalem District Court to 18 years imprisonment. This is reported by our correspondent 'Adi Malul.

'Mitigating Circumstances' Cited

TA271438 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] The Vanunu affair is serious but there are mitigating circumstances—thus wrote the three judges in Vanunu's trial in their sentence, parts of which have now been released for publication. The mitigating circumstances are: the defendant's full cooperation during his interrogation and the harsh conditions of his imprisonment.

Our correspondent Mikha'el Birenhack reports that the judges also wrote that signs of repentance were discernible in Vanunu's latest statements. As may be recalled, Vanunu was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Vanunu Appeals to Supreme Court

TA281406 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Mordekhay Vanunu submitted an appeal to the Supreme Court today. Vanunu was sentenced yesterday to 18 years imprisonment after having been convicted of treason and aggravated espionage. Our correspondent Mikha'el Birenhack reports that the court will probably discuss the appeal next year because it is overburdened with cases.

Saudi Arabia Warns Against Attack on Missiles

TA251717 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Saudi Arabia has transmitted a warning to Israel, via the United States, saying that if Israel attempts a preemptive attack on its surface-to-air missiles, Saudi Arabia will attack Israeli targets with the remaining missiles. Our Washington correspondent Shim'on Schiffer reports that the Saudi ambassador in Washington conferred with congressmen in a bid to convince them that the PRC missiles are meant to protect his country against Iran and are not intended for attacks on Israel.

Silence Over Iraqi Gas Use Causes 'Amazement'

TA251923 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Israel today expressed amazement at the world's silence over Iraqi chemical attacks on pro-Iranian Kurds, which killed or injured 5,000 civilians this week. The Foreign Ministry statement said we are amazed about the silence of the international community in the face of the atrocities committed against Iraqi Kurds and it is astonishing that this grave issue was not even mentioned at the Islamic Conference in Amman. Israel found Iraq's actions most alarming and a grave reminder of the readiness of certain countries in the Middle East to make use of chemical weapons mercilessly, slaughtering defenseless men, women, and children.

The Israeli statement compared relatively low-level international coverage of the bombings with the mass media focusing on the territories.

Foreign Ministry Condemns Acts

TA261951 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Israel regards the Iraqi chemical weapon attack on the Kurds as a horrendous and worrisome act. The official communique issued by Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ehud Gol states that according to the information Israel has, 5,000 Kurds have so far been killed by chemical weapon raids. Israel is stunned by the silence of the international community in the face of the atrocities and the readiness of certain Middle Eastern countries to use that kind of weapon to mercilessly murder defenseless people.

'Indignation' Expressed Over Shultz Meeting

TA251251 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 25 Mar 88 pp 1a, 2

[Report by Ilan Bakhar and 'Ofra Yeshu'a-Lyth]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has expressed his indignation at U.S. Secretary of State Shultz' intention to meet in the United States with two members of the PNC, Prof Edward Sa'id and Prof Ibrahim Abu Lughud. Shamir yesterday told MA'ARIV that he learned of the meeting only after his return from Washington from members of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. [passage omitted]

The two professors, who are U.S. citizens, were scheduled to participate in the Palestinian delegation that canceled its meeting with Shultz during his visit to Jerusalem. Shamir told the Americans that the meeting with the two will break an American promise made in 1975 not to meet with PLO members. Prime Minister's Office officials said: The council is none other than the PLO's supreme body.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 25 March on page 6 adds that "in private, Shim'on Peres reacted to the meeting by saying: 'I would advise Shultz not to meet with them.' Yesterday, top Foreign Ministry sources said sarcastically that the scheduled meeting between Shultz and the PLO members is one of the 'achievements' of Shamir's trip to Washington, proving that anyone who objects to an international conference is actually bringing negotiations with the PLO closer."]

At the end of Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's visit to Washington, Secretary Shultz said: "It is perfectly obvious that the Soviet concept of the international conference differs profoundly from that of the United States." [passage omitted]

Shamir was not surprised by the Soviet stance. He said: "It was obvious the Soviets want a conference with authority and the ability to impose a solution on the parties." It has been learned from the Foreign Ministry that there is no reason for the United States to budge from its original plan, because the Soviets have not closed the door on the U.S. initiative.

Shamir Sees 'No Chances' for Negotiations

TA271158 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 27 Mar 88 p 1a, 2

[Report by Ilan Bakhar, 'Ofra Yeshu'a-Lyth and Shefi Gabay]

[Excerpt] U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz will come to Israel next Sunday for another 3-day shuttle tour among the countries in the area. During his stay here Shultz intends to submit a draft invitation for an international conference that would open on the foreign minister level in Geneva on 15 April. After he receives the reactions of the countries to the draft, he will formulate the final version for an invitation and submit it to the UN secretary general.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir told MA'ARIV yesterday: "There are no chances for negotiations at this time. I understand that Secretary Shultz has decided not to abandon the initiative and to continue the efforts, but so far no progress can be seen. However, if he has decided to come then let him come."

Shamir said that now we must give priority to ending the disturbances in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, these being, in his opinion, "the greatest obstacle on the way to peace at present." According to Shamir, "The Arabs are euphoric. They believe they are winning and ask what they need negotiations for. They are interested only in negotiations in which we will surrender, and obviously this is absurd."

"So far Secretary Shultz has not received a positive answer from any element. With the Soviets he did not conclude anything. At the end of April Secretary Shultz is scheduled to be in Moscow, where he will continue the talks on the Middle East, among other things. How can he talk about an invitation to a conference as early as 1 week from now?" Shamir said.[passage omitted]

Addresses Knesset on Peace

TA281005 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0805 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Address by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir before an extraordinary plenary Knesset session—live]

[Text] [Picked up in midsentence] 1986 I stressed the importance of unity as a supreme principle and goal. As will be recalled, I urged and preached national unity as far back as the election campaign that preceded the establishment of the incumbent government. At that time, immediately after the election, I proposed establishing a national unity government. I have done my best, throughout this government's term, to allow it to continue to serve its term and thus exalt and bolster unity in all government and national bodies.

Today, approximately 3 and 1/2 years after the establishment of this government, I do not for a moment regret the efforts I exerted toward establishing and maintaining national unity. On the contrary, at the height of the latest developments—the riots staged by the Arabs of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District; the accelerated political activity and my latest visit to the United States—I can state without a shadow of a doubt that in this chapter of the annals of the State of Israel, national unity has become even more imperative and essential.

Unity—real unity among us—would have boosted the morale of the soldiers, the policemen, and other security personnel combatting the disruptions to public order, the rocks, the violence, and the provocation in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. They need to feel that the people are united in backing, supporting, and encouraging them in the discharge of their duties and the great efforts they are making to achieve calm and tranquillity. National unity over the basic principles and an expression of consensus over the government's basic guidelines would have allowed us to steer the peace process along a route that would have served the national interest and promoted the chance for peace in our region.

National unity would deter all those who are plotting to harm us and force us to make concessions at the expense of Israel's security and national defense. United, Israel can march forward confidently toward an arrangement and pursue the path of negotiations which, of course, is laden with obstacles and requires the maximum mobilization of all our mental faculties and willpower. The opposite is also true. Divided, Israel encourages its enemies and invites pressures and concessions. Furthermore, by showing divisiveness, Israel plants doubts in the hearts of its friends regarding its ability to stand fast....

Whether we like it or not, in this chapter of the history of the State of Israel, the eyes of the whole world are riveted on events in our country. Every incident and statement are highlighted in both Western and Eastern media. It is impossible to shake the impression that our people and

this country are constantly being tested by the demands that are being made of us. Such demands have never been made of any another country and if they had been, no other country could have stood up to them. Yet these demands are being made of us with extreme temerity. We reject the condemnations and dismiss the moralizing speeches. In view of this international state of affairs, is it possible to doubt for even a moment the vital importance of unity in Israel? I therefore state unhesitatingly that we must preserve national unity. Unity offers the chance for true peace.

Mr Speaker, in the course of my latest visit to the United States I had the opportunity to observe firsthand the moods among the Jewish and non-Jewish public, and noted the effects of what is happening in Israel on them. Some complained about the discord emanating from Israel and the confusion it sows among Israel's friends. Others bitterly complained about the fact that various Israelis visit foreign countries and issue calls to Israel's friends—Jews and gentiles—to talk the U.S. Administration into pressuring Israel to change its policy and accept concessions in spite of itself. I met with U.S. Jews from all strata—with both leaders and rank and file—and have no doubt that the events that have taken place in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza over the past few months and the attempts to incite the U.S. public against us have confused this large and dear Jewish community and caused it great pain. The Jewish community responded to this by coming out en masse in support of and solidarity with the State of Israel and its prime minister. In marches, rallies, and many other meetings, they called on us not to give in to pressure and not to be frightened by the media's hostility toward Israel.

They wished to express their support for our efforts to quell the rioting in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. They insisted that Israel and its government—and only Israel and its government—can decide on the policy best suited to Israel's national interest. They therefore stated that they would honor the decisions that will be adopted by the Israeli Government.

Indeed, the majority of the large U.S. Jewish community identifies with Israel. It constantly follows the events here closely, out of concern for Israel's security and future, and is ready to help us as best it can. This is an important and precious defense barrier for all of us, and we should guard, nurture, and foster it carefully. We all live in an open, democratic society. It is therefore only natural that a Jew in the United States would want to hear about and understand the whole range of political views in Israel, particularly on such a vital issue as peace with our neighbors.

Yet the impression of a divided U.S. Jewish community which has been created has encouraged quite a few hostile elements, not only in the United States but also in Europe and the Arab countries, to indulge in the hope that such a split will diminish Israel's standing in the United States and result in pressure on Israel. To the best of my judgment, we have managed to contain the damage. We brought the U.S. Jewish community an unambiguous message that allowed it to unite in support of Israel's policy. We explained that Israel is not divided into a peace camp and another camp opposed to peace, and clarified that every Jew in Israel ardently desires peace. I never disguised the fact that there is a dispute in Israel and even in the government over the preferred and desirable way to attain peace. These are legitimate differences of opinion in a democratic society.

Finally, wherever I went, I explained the government's policy, which is based on guidelines endorsed by the Knesset. These can be summed up in one sentence: adhering to the Camp David agreements and insisting that those who signed these accords remain faithful to them and that they be implemented. After all, it is clear to everyone that if we embark on the next phase of the peace process by violating or ignoring past agreements, the value of any future agreements would be questionable, and who could say that some day someone would not come and demand further concessions from us, under the pretext that even the new agreements are outdated and the circumstances have changed?

Mr Speaker, the government's basic guidelines adequately reflect the national consensus over the peace arrangements, and I am determined to adhere to them faithfully until the end of this government's term. They state, and I quote, that the government will continue to place the desire for peace at the top of its list of priorities, will take action to promote the peace process in accordance with the framework laid down at Camp David, and will call upon Jordan to launch peace negotiations. In these negotiations, the government will consider any suggestion raised by Jordan. The basic guidelines also stipulate that Israel will oppose the establishment of an additional Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and in the territory between Israel and Jordan, and will not negotiate with the PLO.

We did not wait for others to come to us with peace initiatives. We launched our own initiatives, although not all of them can be outlined publicly at the moment. This was done neither out of weakness nor for propaganda purposes. As far back as my visit to the United States last February, I presented U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz with all the details of our peace plan. We then transmitted messages to Jordan, through various channels, inviting it to enter into real peace negotiations with us. Last October, shortly before the summit meeting between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union which was going to be held in Washington, Mr Shultz visited Israel and proposed that the U.S. President and General Secretary Gorbachev invite the heads of the countries involved in the Middle East conflict to join the summit meeting in Washington, where the superpower leaders would call on them to enter into negotiations for a peace settlement. As Mr Shultz

explained to us, this would have provided Jordan with international legitimacy, if this was actually necessary, to conduct negotiations with Israel.

Despite my hesitations, I accepted the secretary of state's offer so we could embark on negotiations. Jordan's King Husayn, however, rejected the offer, and it was consequently dismissed. The Jordanian monarch thus showed that he does not want international legitimacy or even an international opening to negotiations; he wants only a prolonged conference which would isolate Israel, handle only matters pertaining to the negotiations, and pressure Israel. We never agreed to fall into such a trap, and will never do so in the future.

The disturbances which erupted in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza prompted the latest chapter in the attempts to promote the peace process. The rioters, those who incited them, and their sympathizers clearly do not desire peace or an agreement; it does not take much to guess what their true wishes are. The best way to describe the objectives of the hit squads operating under the umbrella organization known as the PLO was offered by one of their poets and a member of the PLO executive, Mahmud Darwish, who is called the PLO's minister of cultural affairs and is regarded as a moderate for some odd, inexplicable reason. I would gladly read that poem to the Knesset, but I do not want to accord it the honor of appearing in the minutes of the Knesset gazette. No one in his right mind who is attuned to nuances needs that dubious poet's foolish poem, which not only calls upon us to get out of the entire land for good but also urges us to take our dead with us, to realize the nature of our enemies' true goals and those of the people who wave the banner of the murderous organizations while staging the violent demonstrations.

The citizens of Israel, the security forces in general, and the soldiers and policemen who must deal with the demonstrations and the violence have the power, patience, and determination to overcome and quell the riots. Even if additional time is needed, the right way to achieve quiet will be found, so that the rioters and their bosses will have no doubt they have achieved nothing and will gain nothing except suffering and bereavement.

Despite all the hardships and obstacles, we continue to conduct our lives normally, as do the Jewish residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District, to whom I wish to send messages of encouragement. Yet the pictures and stories about events in the territories shown overseas have created a particularly negative impression, as a result of which various elements in the international community have come out with condemnations, sermons, or suggestions that we ignore reality. No one has come out with a practical solution to end the riots without simultaneously offering a prize to the organizers and instigators, or without hurting the chances for the promotion of a peaceful settlement despite these manifestations of hatred and violence.

Against this backdrop, the United States has resumed its efforts to seek a formula that would make it possible to launch negotiations for a peace settlement. We believe that if there is any chance for a breakthrough and if the Arab side harbors even the minimal desire to reach true peace with us, it is the United States that can exhaust and implement it because of its close and friendly relations with most of the countries in the region. The United States enjoys the trust and confidence of all the sides. We have seen in the past that whenever the United States plays the role of mediator, broker, or go-between, the chances of its success in promoting the attainment of a settlement between the parties are good.

However, any attempt to find an alternative to direct, bilateral negotiations by means of an international conference and plans that ignore our security needs and our future cannot succeed. We explained this very clearly to President Reagan and to Secretary Shultz, who have often demonstrated their friendship toward Israel in word and deed. Meanwhile, we presented our ideas for the peaceful settlement of the conflict, emphasizing that the details must be left for discussion in direct and free negotiations between the parties involved. Following are the principles we presented: We are prepared to accept the token presence of the two superpowers in the opening of direct negotiations for peace between the sides, in accordance with Mr Shultz' proposal of last October. We appended certain conditions before consenting to this. The negotiations will be conducted between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, without outside interference in the content of the negotiations.

The Palestinian Arab members of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation must be acceptable to the parties involved in the negotiations. We will not conduct negotiations with the PLO, either directly or indirectly. In this context, let me point out that we take a very grave view of the U.S. attempts to establish contacts with PLO people, and PNC members are full-fledged PLO people. This council is the supreme body of the terror organizations; it created the notorious Palestinian Covenant and determines the policy of the terror organizations.

The purpose of negotiations is to reach a peace treaty with Jordan and find a solution to the problem of the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el. Israel's position will be based on the Camp David Accords, namely on the agreement to establish autonomy in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District as an interim stage, followed by negotiations on the permanent status of these areas. Israel will submit a proposal for the rehabilitation of the Arab refugees of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, which will be financed by an international fund to be set up specifically for that purpose.

In the course of the lengthy and comprehensive deliberations we held with U.S. Administration leaders, and as a result of the consultations and examinations we carried out alone, we now realize with even greater certainty that the principles we presented constitute a reasonable and

fair solution to the problem. The interim stage, namely the autonomy, has become even more essential and necessary today than when originally conceived and presented by then Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

I call upon the responsible and level-headed Arabs of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District to realize this: Your fate is in your hands. If you succumb to the pressure of the PLO agents, you will wreak suffering and hopelessness upon your own kin. Do not be deceived by the extremists who tell you Israel is about to bow and capitulate. Israel will neither surrender nor bend. It has the power, strength, and desire to overcome anyone who rises against it. We are all destined to live together on this land. If you wish, it will be possible to enjoy a life of well being, mutual respect, and coexistence; if you do not, the responsibility for the suffering and pain that will befall your brethren will fall upon your own shoulders.

Let us tell the Arab citizens of Israel today: Do not be dragged along by instigators and agitators! Cast out those who spread the fire and preserve peace! There is no nation that wants peace and is prepared to live in peace more than Israel.

Mr Speaker, in the talks we conducted with U.S. Administration leaders, we reviewed the fabric of relations between our two countries in every sphere. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the depth of the prevailing level of friendship and cooperation. President Reagan particularly noted his contribution toward and support for the establishment of the framework for strategic cooperation and the signing of the agreement on the establishment of a free trade zone between Israel and the United States. Both the President and the secretary of state emphasized that the alliance between Israel and the United States is unassailable, even if we disagree on the way to promote the peace process. This is the proper basis for the fabric of our relations with the United States, and we will continue to strive to preserve and develop it on these foundations in the future, too.

The sought-for progress in our relations with the Soviet Union has not yet been achieved. We had hoped the changes taking place in the Soviet Union would result in a change for the better in that large country's attitude toward the Jewish people and its land. To date, however, our hopes have been frustrated. There is no change in the orientation of the Soviet Government, both with regard to its relations with Israel and to granting exit permits for Soviet Jews to immigrate to Israel. There is no justification for the continuation of this alienation. Therefore, we will never let up in our efforts to persuade the Soviet Government to change its policy, resume diplomatic relations, and open its gates to those Jews who wish to return to their homeland.

This year, as we sit down at the Passover table, let us fondly remember all our brothers and sisters in the countries of distress, from the Soviet Union through Syria, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, and Ethiopia, and pray for their return to their homeland.

Mr Speaker, in the Middle East a war of such cruelty is raging that it must shock and dismay all those created in God's image. Shocking reports have recently appeared on the use of chemical weapons against a civilian population and the murder of thousands of Kurds by Iraq through the use of these weapons. Even more appalling is the fact that the civilized world observes these horrors with equanimity, not lifting a finger to put an end to them.

Mr Speaker, all Jews will soon celebrate Passover, the festival of freedom. Several days thereafter, we will all celebrate the 40th anniversary of the State of Israel's independence. We are thus about to celebrate two holidays that exalt the spirit, recall the exodus from Egypt thousands of years ago, and mark the renewal of Israel's existence in its homeland in our times. We call upon the entire Jewish community wherever it may be to join us in celebrating these holidays and days of joy. This call is made precisely in light of the fact that there are elements striving to mar our rejoicing and harm us. It is therefore incumbent upon us to wave the Israeli banner proudly and celebrate our holidays securely and joyfully.

We have come a long and remarkable way since the establishment of the state 40 years ago. We have faced obstacles and dangers, and despite the wars and other attacks, the people of Israel are marching forward assuredly toward their future and toward the age of redemption and salvation, security, creativity, and peace. The words of the prophet Micah come alive in front of our very eyes: As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them marvelous things. [Micah 7:15] Let the call issue forth from the Israeli Knesset to all the people of Israel in Eretz Yisra'el and throughout the diaspora: A kosher and happy festival of freedom! Be strong!

Cabinet Hears Shamir Report, Views Other Matters

TA271305 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] In the cabinet meeting today Minister Moshe Shahal demanded the dismissal of Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, following the latter's remarks on the Chinese missiles in Saudi Arabia. Shahal claimed that the remarks are highly detrimental to the State of Israel.

On another subject, Shahal said the Likud policy brought about the meeting between Secretary of State George Shultz and PLO member Professor Edward Said.

Earlier, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir reported to the cabinet on his visit to the United States and on his talks with President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz. Mr Shamir said in the meeting: They are presenting us with a nightmarish picture, threatening us with disaster, if we fail to accept the Shultz initiative. It is not the truth, it is an intimidation campaign.

Our political correspondent adds that the debate in the meeting, which ended without resolutions, was conducted in loud voices and a tense atmosphere. Thus, when Minister Moda'i was addressing the cabinet, for instance, Vice Prime Minister Peres made a show of leaving the room, returning only after Moda'i had completed his speech.

Further on 27 March Session

TA271851 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Excerpt] At the weekly cabinet session, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir reported on his trip to the United States and on last week's meeting between Secretary of State Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze.

Defense Minister Rabin and Police Minister Bar-Lev reported on the situation in the territories and preparations for Land Day. The cabinet voiced appreciation for the work of Yosef Hermelin, the head of the Shin Bet who is retiring. A new Shin Bet chief would take office in April. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] Defense Minister Rabin reported that the number of Palestinians from the territories under detention is now between 3,000 and 4,000. He denied reports that the supplies of water and food to the village of Qabatiyah had been cut off.

Foreign Minister Peres said: It is a pity that Prime Minister Shamir did not reply to the Shultz initiative with an unequivocal yes. What do we have to fear in an international conference, Peres asked. He accused the Likud of a campaign of slander against the Labor Party. It is unfortunate that there is no dialogue between the two halves of the government, as there was during the Tabah negotiations, Peres said. I learned my lesson at Tabah, Shamir said, when the Labor Party cooperated with the Egyptians against the government. Prove it, Peres retorted. I have all the proof I need, said Shamir.

Shamir said it is the Labor Alignment that is trying to intimidate the nation by saying if Israel does not accept the Shultz initiative, it will be a tragedy. In a similar vein, Shamir's Likud colleague Yitzhaq Moda'i asked: Why all the urgency? What's it good for? Only for giving up Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. If that's what the Labor Party wants, it should say so. [passage omitted [end recording]

Mubarak Sends Shamir Message on Peace Process

TA251713 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak has sent a message to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir urging him to agree to the resumption of the peace process and do everything in his power to remove the obstacles that lie on the road to that end. It is important that we refrain from exacerbating the situation or creating new areas of tension and struggle, wrote the Egyptian president. He added that a hostile Israeli approach will be construed by many as an attempt to divert attention from the peace process by creating new points of tension.

Shamir Response

TA251833 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak believes the Arab countries are looking forward hopefully to the expansion of the peace process and to further distancing themselves from war. In Mubarak's opinion, the convocation of an international conference would neither limit the parties' freedom of action nor curtail their ability to engage in deliberations, and will have no effect on the outcome of the negotiations. Yet declarations in the vein of those made by the director general of the Prime Minister's Office on the PRC missiles in Saudi Arabia will have a negative impact. It is important that the situation not worsen and that the parties make an effort to abstain from creating new areas of tension and struggle.

[Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew at 1815 GMT on 25 March, in a report from the studio by political correspondent Yig'al Goren, adds: "Saudi Arabia has its own defense problems and they are completely unrelated to Israel, the Egyptian president stated in his message. It therefore makes no sense to term it a hostile country, nor is there any justification for this. Consequently, there is no basis for threats against it. In his special message, the Egyptian president also addressed the peace process, noting that in the absence of progress in the political process, there may be a further deterioration in the situation soon."] Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the above was included in a message dispatched by President Mubarak to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, the main point of which is an exhortation to Shamir to agree to resume the peace process and to do everything in his power to remove the obstacles on that road.

This evening, Mr Shamir responded to the Egyptian president's message and said: We never threatened anyone. Rather, we expressed our concern over the introduction of dangerous weapons—the missiles—into the region. [Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew at 1815 GMT adds: "The prime minister responded to President Mubarak by saying that the Egyptian reaction is exaggerated."]

'Ulterior Motives' Said Behind U.S. Travel Ban

TA271129 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir believes the ban introduced by the U.S. Administration on its citizens visiting the territories was sparked by ulterior motives, and it looks as though this is the beginning of

the political pressure on the Israeli Government. Minister Sharir told our correspondent Menahem Friedman that most of the U.S. tourists who have canceled their visits are Jews. The tourism minister called on U.S. Jews to demonstrate their support for Israel by coming to Israel precisely during this period. Sharir expressed the fear that 1988 will be difficult for tourism because of the events in the territories.

Ministers' Offices Welcome Shultz Visit

TA270528 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] In the Prime Minister's Office satisfaction was expressed with the U.S. decision to intervene on a high level for furthering a political process. At the same time a senior source told our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami that Mr Shamir still insists that the framework proposed by Secretary Shultz is not good.

In Foreign Minister Peres' office satisfaction was expressed with the planned visit of Secretary Shultz to Israel next week. According to Minister Peres' aides, this proves that the administration has received positive answers regarding the Shultz initiative from most of the concerned parties.

Palestinians 'Hopeful'

TA280541 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Prominent Palestinians in the territories say they are not certain whether they will again boycott U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz when he arrives in the Middle East next week. This as the Palestinians express satisfaction over the Shultz meeting with the two members of the PNC on Saturday in Washington. Steve Rodan reports:

[Begin recording] [Rodan] Some prominent Palestinians appear hopeful over the forthcoming visit of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. The Palestinians expressed satisfaction with Shultz' meeting with two American professors of Palestinian origin who are members of the PNC. Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj:

[Frayj] We view it is a very positive American step toward the Palestinian people. I do not understand the Israeli objections. Israelis try to create so much pressure and blow the whole issue out of proportion, but I think the meeting was significant, positive, and is on the right track.

[Rodan] Still Frayj says it is too early to tell whether the Palestinians will again boycott Shultz as they had done earlier this month and in October. What the Palestinians are apparently waiting for is guidance from the PLO. [end recording]

On another issue Mayor Frayj said Arabs in the territories want Arab mayors to remain in their posts, even if they were appointed and not elected. He reiterated that he would not resign and asserted that he was under no pressure to do so.

'Arafat Aide Says Talks With Shultz To Continue

TA281309 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in in Hebrew 28 Mar 88 pp 1a, 2

[Report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef, Shefi Gabay and Ran Dagoni]

[Excerpt] Talks between representatives of the Palestinian people identified with the PLO and U.S. Administration officials will continue. An additional meeting between Shultz and Palestinian representatives is expected soon. This was claimed yesterday in a telephone conversation to Israel by Bassam Abu Sharif, 'Arafat's senior adviser.

Abu Sharif told his interlocutor that the meeting with Professor Edward Said and Professor Ibrahim Abu al-Lughud was the first contact approved by 'Arafat that the U.S. secretary of state has had with members of the Palestine National Council.

"We view the meeting as an important step toward advancing the peace negotiations. The two representatives told Shultz that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that any arrangement would require recognition of the legitimate rights of our people in setting up an independent state. Shultz knew the contents of the conversation would be immediately reported to 'Arafat."

Abu Sharif expressed his concern about the situation in the territories, and said the behavior of the soldiers might create hatred that would seriously damage attempts to advance peace. Abu Sharif did not reject the possibility that the next meeting between Shultz and Palestinian representatives would take place during Shultz' visit to Jerusalem. Official U.S. sources in Jerusalem said last night that they have not yet received instructions to prepare for such a meeting, but in their view one is possible. [passage omitted]

Yosi Beilin Discusses Negotiations Outlook

TA251313 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Interview with Yosi Beilin, political director general of the Foreign Ministry, by Arye Golan and political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami—live]

[Text] [Golan] We are discussing the political contacts for the convening of an international conference and the Shultz initiative. Dr Beilin, Foreign Minister Peres has spoken about an international framework which would not be binding, an umbrella, an opening, an international event—all these phrases have been used—which

would be the beginning of direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Now, after Shevardnadze's talks in Washington, we see that the Soviet Union is aiming at a real conference.

[Beilin] I do not think this should be a surprise for anybody. We have known all along that the Soviets are talking about a different international conference than we, the Americans, or the Jordanians would like to see. In April of 1987 an understanding was reached concerning the character of the international conference, which was to be only a framework and an opening, and not a binding conference. This understanding was reached through the Americans with the Jordanians and the Egyptians, and this is actually the greatest Israeli foreign policy achievement in the last few years. At the time the next stage was slated to be a discussion with the Soviets of this issue. This discussion, however, was stopped short. The halt in these talks was largely due to Israeli reservations, and they have been renewed—perhaps a little too late—a year later. This is only the beginning. This was the first serious discussion between Shultz and Shevardnadze over the international conference issue, and the differences of opinion which have existed all along came out into the open in this discussion as well.

[Ben-'Ami] Let us look to the future, Dr Beilin. There have been various developments regarding the international conference issue. The Soviets, for example, desire to participate and want the conference to have authority. They also want the conference to sit in on all the negotiations. We are hearing that Secretary Shultz wants to meet two PNC men, who are U.S. citizens of Palestinian origin. This would be, in other words, the first U.S.-PLO contacts. Do you still think the Husayn-Peres agreement offers a basis on which to conduct negotiations?

[Beilin] I think the agreement made—again I repeat it was made through the Americans—in April 1987 is the greatest breakthrough we have made, and I believe it is still valid and that we can build upon it a peace policy for the Middle East. I have no doubts about it. The Shultz document, which was handed to the sides only 2-3 weeks ago, to a large extent ratifies the April 1987 document. Therefore, it seems to me that this is the only serious basis on which to negotiate. I do not think this document has been eroded, by the Jordanians, the Egyptians, or the Americans. As for this meeting with the PNC members—by the way, it is not the first meeting of its kind, there were quite a few other meetings of this kind since 1975—I do not think it will contribute very much to the peace process....

[Ben-'Ami, interrupting] Doesn't it violate the 1975 U.S. promise that the U.S. Administration will not meet the PLO.

[Beilin] Let me repeat that in my opinion the only way to reach negotiations on the Palestinian issue—and this cannot be done without Palestinians—is by means of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which would accept 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations and which would reject terrorism. This is the only way. I do not think meetings with PNC members such as the one being discussed can contribute to the peace process. The American interpretation regarding PNC members is, however, different from our interpretation. There is nothing new here.

[Golan] Prime Minister Shamir and the entire Likud are afraid of a trap if they enter an international conference. Isn't it a real possibility that if that conference convenes it will have real authority, just as the Soviet Union wants, and that the Israeli delegation will find 'Arafat or one of his close friends attending?

[Beilin] The talks between Shevardnadze and Shultz have proven that the United States stands firmly behind its promises to us. It will not enter a conference with binding power, a conference which could annul bilateral agreements made by us and the Jordanians. This is the most important thing for us. We will not be faced by any surprises. We will not come to a conference in which the PLO will participate, we will not come to a conference with binding power, and in this we have full American backing. It is a mistake to think that one can enter any kind of political negotiations and be entirely free of pressure. I suggest we recall Camp David, which offered the best possible situation for Israel, the Egyptians, and the Americans alone. In that situation Mr Begin achieved his greatest political success, but he gave up the entire Sinai. Therefore, I do not think anybody knows any trick of reaching negotiations where we will not face some kind of pressure. The alternative to negotiations is an imposed settlement or war, God forbid, and I do not believe that any of us wants this.

[Ben-'Ami] Dr Beilin, how do you regard the possibility that Shultz may return here? Does this mean that perhaps he has a silent understanding with the Soviets or Husayn. Why isn't Husayn voicing his position vis-a-vis this planned move?

[Beilin] Look, I am not Husayn's spokesman—I am not sure that had I offered myself to him he would have appointed me, of all people. I think, however, that the Jordanians and the Syrians have said where they stand. The Syrians said they will not enter the process and they will not prevent anybody else from entering. The Jordanians said it is an interesting thing which has many good things in it and that they have to think about it. The Egyptians also regarded it positively. I do not think there is any doubt regarding Jordan's position. It is well known that the whole thing came about because of Jordan's position; it wants such a conference and would not have launched direct negotiations with us otherwise. Therefore, to a large extent Shultz' entire move is meant to bring us and the Jordanians together. I regard Shultz' arrival—if he indeed comes—as a very positive sign proving that the Americans understand we have to reach a political solution, and that we can do so now. From our

point of view, we have no better alternative than to reach a political solution with administrations most friendly toward Israel. We should pray for the arrival of Shultz and for the continuation of the peace process.

[Ben-'Ami] By the way, if he does not come, as planned, on 3 April, does it mean this plan is being shelved?

[Beilin] I cannot say that if this or that visit takes place or doesn't take place the entire initiative is dead, but I will consider his visit as a very encouraging sign.

[Golan] Do you have final confirmation of his visit?

[Beilin] No, we have not received any official announcement.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

2 Dead, 7 Wounded in W. Bank

TA251321 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] This afternoon, a report from 'Aliya Hospital in Hebron claimed that two Tarqumiyah villagers died of their wounds. Al-Hasan Hospital in Bethlehem, Al-Maqasid Hospital in East Jerusalem, and 'Aliya Hospital in Hebron have reported a total of seven wounded Tarqumiyah villagers. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that there was a violent brawl in Tarqumiyah this morning, in which hundreds of villagers attacked IDF soldiers who came there to carry out detentions. The soldiers tried to disperse them with tear gas and rubber bullets, but once they realized their lives were endangered, they opened fire at the rioters' feet. The IDF is investigating the Tarqumiyah incidents.

Riots Reported After Prayers

TA251424 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] There were riots in Hebron and Tulkarm after prayers in the mosques today. According to the reports that have reached our newsroom so far, it appears that one person was injured in a riot in the Green Mosque in Hebron. In a riot in the village of Idnah, which is under curfew, 1 rioter was injured; and in a riot in Tarqumiyah, 13 were injured and 2 killed.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the Tulkarm riot was dispersed without casualties.

The IDF is still in the process of dispersing the rioters in Hebron and Halhul. Near Halhul, an Israeli woman sustained slight injuries yesterday when hit in the face by a stone. She is being treated in Jerusalem's Bikur Cholim Hospital.

The driver of the bus that was burned in the village of Si'ir [placename as heard] was severely beaten and his two arms were broken. He is being treated in Hadassah-'En Kerem Hospital.

A military source told our correspondent that the Gaza Strip faithful went home peacefully today. There were only several minor attempts to violate public order but they were contained quickly.

1 Killed in Tulkarm Rioting

TA261520 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] One person was killed and another wounded in a violent riot in the village of (Filsh) in the Tulkarm District. A military source told our correspondent Moti Amir that many villagers rioted, erected barricades of rocks and burning tires, and attacked the IDF soldiers from all sides with stones, bottles, and metal bars. The IDF soldiers were faced with mortal danger, and following attempts to disperse the rioters with tear gas, rubber bullets, and shots in the air, the commanders of the unit fired at the rioters' feet. This resulted in the wounding of two people, one of whom died of his wounds. A curfew was imposed on the village for several hours until quiet was restored in the region. The curfew has since been lifted.

This morning, a resident of the village of Zawata near Nabulus died of gunfire wounds incurred last night as an assembly along the Nabulus-Tulkarm road was being dispersed.

Another Death Reported in Riots

TA271540 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Report by 'Eran Ben-Porat—live]

[Excerpts] Last night, an IDF squad entered the village of Maythalun in the Janin District to arrest suspected terrorist activists. Prior to leaving the village this morning, the squad was attacked by masked men emerging from a mosque with axes and stones. The soldiers managed to capture several rioters without using arms. Later, the soldiers were once again attacked with firebombs. Two cars began driving toward them and tried to run them over. Gunfire was directed at the cars, and three youngsters aged 17, 21, and 26 were killed. Another inhabitant of the village was wounded in the leg.

A tourist bus lost its way in the village of Salfit. An IDF squad arrived on the scene to help the bus through, but it was attacked from various directions by a mob. When the situation became dangerous the soldiers opened fire to clear their way. A youngster was wounded by the shots, and he later died of his wounds. A curfew was imposed on Salfit. [passage omitted]

A commercial strike was staged throughout most of Judaea and Samaria. Commerce strikes took place in Nabulus, Janin, and the Jericho area by order of the security forces, while shops remained open until 1100 in Hebron and Ramallah. Ramallah Municipality also closed down early. Most laborers left for work in Israel. Only a few workers from Nabulus, Hebron, and Janin left for work.

Gaza Acting Mayor Resigns

TA261428 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Hamza al-Turkamani, the acting mayor of Gaza, has announced his intention to resign. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Al-Turkamani had been appointed by the Gaza Strip Military Government. According to Arab sources, he has already submitted his resignation.

Former Gaza Mayor Rashad al-Shawwa said Al-Turkamani had been loaned to the municipality from the Interior Ministry. Since he resigned from the Interior Ministry, that resignation also applies to his position as acting mayor.

Pamphlet No 11, which was distributed in the territories last week, called on all the members of municipal councils and appointed local councils to resign.

Similar demands were also inscribed on the Bethlehem City Hall today. Mayor Ilyas Frayj has told our correspondent that the municipal council members were elected by the residents of Bethlehem and have no intention of resigning.

Youths congregated near Nativity Square in Bethlehem today, and threw rocks at IDF soldiers. An IDF unit dispersed them, but they took up positions near the mosque in the old city and continued to pelt the soldiers with stones, burned tires, and blocked the alleys with rocks and garbage dumpsters. A beefed-up IDF unit dispersed them with tear gas, rubber bullets, and by firing in the air.

There were also other disturbances in the Nabulus and Tulkarm Districts today, as well as in the Al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

Reports from Al-Shifa' Hospital in Gaza maintain that several camp [not further identified] residents have been admitted to the hospital for fractures in various parts of their bodies.

Resignation of Mayor Denied

TA261620 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Two people died in the course of a violent riot in the village of (Filsh) in the Tulkarm District. [passage omitted]

In a violent riot in the village of Al-Zahiriyah south of Hebron this morning, a local resident was wounded by shots fired by the IDF soldiers. A military source reported that the townsmen threw rocks at the IDF soldiers and tried to block the highway. An IDF unit dispersed them with tear gas and rubber bullets. As the stonethrowers were being pursued, the soldiers found themselves under a barrage of rocks from every direction. They finally opened fire at the rioters' feet, slightly injuring one of the rioters in the foot. It has been reported from 'Aliya Hospital in Hebron that a resident of the village of Si'ir was admitted this afternoon for gunshot wounds. The IDF is investigating the circumstances of his injuries.

A senior Gaza Strip Civilian Administration source has denied the report that Acting Mayor Hamza al-Turkamani has resigned. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Al-Turkamani, who had been appointed by the Military Government, only announced his intention to resign. According to the senior source, over the last few days Al-Turkamani was subjected to heavy pressure from extremist elements to resign. [passage omitted]

Dozens of Bayt Hanun residents congregated near the local council building, calling upon the councilmen to resign. An IDF unit that arrived at the scene of the action dispersed them.

Mayors Not To Resign

TA261942 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Excerpt] The mayors of Hebron and Jericho announced today that they are determined not to resign despite the calls included in the pamphlets issued on behalf of the leadership of the uprising in the territories. The two said they deal with municipal affairs, not politics, and added that the Jordanian Government, too, has asked them to remain in their positions. [passage omitted]

Detentions Increase 'Greatly'

TA270549 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] The number of administrative detainees in the territories has greatly increased following a simplification of the detention process. In Judaea and Samaria more than 300 people are under administrative detention, and in the Gaza Strip more than 100 people. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that all the orders for the administrative detentions are for half a year. Among the detainees there are lawyers and correspondents who are suspected of active involvement in the organization of the disturbances.

Arabs Still Seeking Jobs

TA271919 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Excerpts] The head of the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria says Arabs continue to seek work with the Israeli authorities in the territories. This, despite pressure on Palestinians to resign from the Civil Administration. Back to Steve Rodan:

[Begin recording] Every day military authorities are waging a quiet campaign to convince Arab mayors in the territories to remain in their positions. Military sources acknowledge that the mayors are under constant pressure to resign, but insist that no one yet has done so. The former head of the Civil Administration, Brigadier General Efrayim Sne says one factor is the support Jordan has displayed for the mayors to remain in their posts. [passage omitted]

Military sources say some of the mayors, such as Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj and Jericho Mayor Jamil Sabu Khalaf, are strong enough to resist the pressures to resign. The rest of the mayors are playing a waiting game. Officials are asking these mayors to delay any decision to quit. At the same time, they are encouraging Arabs to continue serving in the Civil Administration. So far, the sources say, the results have been positive. The head of the Civil Administration, Brigadier General Shay Erez, brings one example. He says that last week, 10 positions for tax collectors were advertised. Within 3 days, 16 Arabs presented applications. [end recording]

Strikes Underway in Territories

TA281143 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] A full commercial and transportation strike is underway in the territories today. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that most of the vehicles on the roads belong to the army or to correspondents. Our correspondent reports that youths began to riot in the Al-Am'ari refugee camp, throwing stones and burning tires. An IDF force is firing tear gas at them, but has not yet entered the camp.

Paper Circumvents Ban By Printing Supplement

TA261358 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The publishers of AL-ITTIHAD, whose publication was banned for 1 week by the interior minister, have printed the paper's satirical supplement and distributed 30,000 issues of it in the Arab villages. The satirical supplement, called (AL-NIMAZ), began appearing irregularly 3 years ago, but to date only 18 issues have been published.

Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports that the authorities take a very grave view of the attempt to circumvent the closure order issued against AL-ITTIHAD by turning its satirical supplement into a regular newspaper.

AL-ITTIHAD Supplements Banned

TA261926 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister, in his capacity as acting interior minister, has issued an injunction banning the printing of AL-ITTIHAD or any of its supplements until the end of the month.

Knesset Transfers Political Debate to Committee

TA281409 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] A short time ago the Knesset decided to transfer the continuation of the political debate to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Our Knesset correspondent points out that this draft proposal was meant to prevent a rift between the Likud and the Alignment regarding the formulation of the statement summing up the political debate.

Yosef Hermelin Resigns as Shin Bet Director

TA271434 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Yosef Hermelin, who had been the director of the Shin Bet for the past 1 and 1/2 years, will at his request end his tenure in the next few days. This was announced today by the prime minister at the cabinet session. His successor has been appointed, and he will assume his post on 1 April.

In today's cabinet session, praise was lavished on Mr Hermelin— who, as may be recalled, had served as director of the Shin Bet for a long period in the past—for his dedication and responsibility toward his duties at a very tough and challenging time. Hermelin returned to the Shin Bet in the aftermath of the No 300 bus affair. The cabinet wished his successor the best.

'Amiram Nir Reportedly Resigning Position

TA271719 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] 'Amiram Nir, the prime minister's anti-terrorism adviser, is quitting. This is reported by our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami. Nir's name was linked with that of U.S. Colonel Oliver North in the arms deal affair with Iran and the diversion of funds to the contras in Nicaragua. Until a replacement is appointed, Nir's deputy will serve as the prime minister's anti-terrorism adviser.

Clashes Erupt in Palestinian Camp; 7 Wounded

NC252058 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 2045 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Clashes between Palestinian gunmen, involving the use of automatic weapons, have been going on in 'Ayn al-Hulwah since this evening. The clashes broke out after Jamal Sulayman, a former Fatah official, was subjected to an assassination attempt, which left him wounded.

According to preliminary reports, seven people have been wounded in the clashes.

Fatah Official Assassinated

NC260608 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Fatah has issued a statement saying that a Fatah military official, Farid Hurani, was assassinated and three of his aides wounded while they were carrying out an inspection tour in the vegetable market in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp last night.

Consequently, tension prevailed in the area and shots were fired. Gunmen appeared in alleys. The three injured persons are 'Abd al-'Aziz Diyab, his brother, Haytham, and Husayn Sumsum.

Further on Shootings

NC260850 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in English 0835 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] In south Lebanon, clashes between rival Palestinian factions have resumed this morning in the camp of 'Ayn al-Hulwah, near the city of Sidon.

The fighting was triggered last night when gunmen shot and killed an official of the Fatah Movement, Farid Hurani, and his assistant, Khalid Sulayman.

Several other persons were wounded in the exchange of fire which ensued. Earlier, a military official in the camp, Jamal Sulayman, was critically wounded when his car was ambushed in the main street of the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp.

Clashes Continue 26 Mar

NC261007 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Clashes are taking place in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, east of Sidon, between Palestinian groups which support Yasir 'Arafat and others which support the Fatah Revolutionary Council.

It has been reported that several persons were killed, including Bad'i 'Awayd, and others were wounded. According to reports from Sidon, ambulances have rushed to the scene to transport the wounded to the hospitals.

Violent clashes involving machineguns, rockets, and RPG's were resumed at 0800 this morning. They are an extension of yesterday's clashes, during which Fatah official Farid Hurani and Palestinian Khalid Sulayman were killed, and 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp official Major Jamal Sulayman and other Palestinians were wounded.

'Cautious Calm' Prevails

NC261221 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Efforts undertaken in Sidon have succeeded in halting the clashes between Palestinian groups in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, which were renewed this morning.

An NNA correspondent in Sidon has reported that a cautious calm now prevails in the camp. Certain precautionary measures have been taken for fear of any sudden setback. Thus, schools and certain shops were closed.

The clashes flared up yesterday evening following the murders of Fatah official Farid Hurani and Khalid Sulayman, brother of the commander of the 'Ayn al-Hulwah martyrs battalion.

The clashes led to the death of three others: Haytham Diyab, Nasim Nir'a Hulayhil, and Bad'i 'Awayd. Muhammad Maw'id, Husayn Sumsum, Muhammad Khadir Mubarak, and 'Iz al-Din Diyab were wounded in the fighting. Gunmen have kidnapped 'Iz al-Din Diyab from the hospital where he was being treated and taken him to an unknown destination.

Palestinian sources said at noon that an agreement has been reached to withdraw the gunmen, end the state of alert, and set up an investigation committee. These sources, however, have not set a date for the implementation of these measures.

PLO Reportedly Fires 8 Rockets at Israel

NC271538 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] In a statement issued in Sidon today, the PLO announced that it has fired eight Soviet-made Grad rockets at Qiryat Shemona and Metulla, in Galilee, in northern Israel. The statement did not mention when the rockets were fired.

PLO Official Says Beirut Offices To Reopen

NC280710 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department, left Beirut for Czechoslovakia yesterday. Prior to his departure, he affirmed that the PLO will reopen its offices in Beirut, which were closed in 1982. He said he had discussed this issue with Acting Prime Minister Salim al-Huss and other officials in a positive atmosphere.

Afghanistan

Foreign Ministry Protests Pakistani Air Attack

LD271656 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] The Pakistani charge d'affaires was summoned this morning to the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The following points were made to him by the head of the relevant section:

According to a report which reached Afghanistan's Security Forces authorities, on 19 March 1988 two of Afghanistan's Defense Forces jet aircraft, which were flying near Turkham and committing no violation or provocation, were fired on when they were 3 kms southeast of Turkham by Pakistan's Air Force operating from the region of Charbagh, Pakistan.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan strongly protests this violation by Pakistan's military forces, and demands that the relevant authorities in Pakistan avoid a repetition of such irresponsible actions which have no result other than to aggravate the situation.

Otherwise, responsibility for the grave consequences will rest with the Pakistani authorities.

Border Question 'Irrelevant' at Geneva Talks

LD280844 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0442 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 27, BAKHTAR—Agreement reached upon the time frame of the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the phasing of withdrawal due to constructive and flexible approach of the delegation of Afghanistan in the Geneva talks, the thing which the Pakistani side described as the most important question since many years for reaching final accord in the Geneva talks.

Thus it seemed that the Pakistani side puts forward new, irrelevant and inapplicable questions and is trying to erect artificial obstacles in the way of signing of documents at a time when the question of time-frame for the withdrawal of the Soviet limited military contingent from Afghanistan has been solved.

Among other things is the raising of frontier question between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the root of which goes back to the British colonial domination over Indian sub-contenent.

The Pakistani authorities have lost their political initiative in practice vis-a-vis the constructive stand of Afghanistan and realised the weakness of their stand and that their designs are baseless.

Because while the Pakistani delegation apparently is waiting in Geneva to get instruction from the centre for signing the Geneva accords, they are raising frontier questions to make the process of Geneva talks more complicated and to face it up with failure.

Such a failure has not been raised during almost six years of Geneva talks and is irrelevant to the Cordovez mission, the special envoy of the UN secretary general.

Moreover, posing such a question causes serious concern of a third century when the British colonialists, who were defeated twice in the Afghan land, sought to break the unity of Afghans and Pashtuns and imposed the so-called Durand line, pursuing the evil policy of "divide and rule" in 1893.

But Pashtuns and Baluch peoples have never accepted it and the then governments of Afghanistan also did not recognise the so-called Durand line.

With the establishment of the state of Pakistan four decades ago, the inheritors of British colonialism were seeking to weaken the unity of the inhabitants living around this so-called Durand line.

(?Disregarding) their proudful history and national identity, the border regions were either called the state of northwestern border or Sob-e-Sarhad.

In recent years the strivings of the military authorities of Pakistan for the weakening of unity and solidarity of Pashtuns and Baluchis were tangible. The delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan is never authorised to talk about the issue of the so-called Durand line and will only discuss the foreign aspects of the present situation in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, talks about this matter depend upon the third country, that is, the Republic of India.

Therefore, the people of Afghanistan are decisively denouncing the irresponsible attitude of Pakistan in raising the issue of the so-called Durand line in order to delay the signing of agreements and to encounter the talks to deadlock.

It should be pointed out that the grave responsibility of the failure of Geneva talks rest with the authorities and the circles which are hampering the signing of the final accord by following the doctrines of war to the last Afghan and to keep the Soviet Union busy in Afghanistan as well as by putting forward unrelated and impracticable matters in the process of Geneva talks.

Democratic Left Issues 'Political Platform'

LD262145 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Mar 88

["Political Platform" issued by "democratic left parties" of Afghanistan—PDPA, Revolutionary Toilers Organization of Afghanistan, and Toilers Organization of Afghanistan—date of issue not specified]

[Text] Being aware of our responsibility for the interests of our country and our people in emerging from the present situation, all patriotic, national, and democratic forces of

the country should unify their efforts and struggle to ensure an end to fratricide and war, to advance the harmonious struggle for rallying all levels and classes of society in the national and democratic movement, and for the development and progress of the country.

Harmonious work and coordination of the democratic left of a country can by no means be considered as a loss of equality of rights, political identity, or political independence.

These organizations retain the right to criticize the views and stands of one another and to publish their political thoughts and ideologies aimed at serving the social, cultural, and political progress of society and at ensuring peace.

The democratic left parties of the Republic of Afghanistan have compiled the following platform for the implementation of national reconciliation in order to end bloodshed, to maintain peace, and to ensure the success of the national and democratic revolution; they struggle for its fulfillment:

Defense of the country's independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty;

Struggle against the interference of reactionary and imperialist forces in the country's affairs;

Attempts to withdraw the Soviet military forces from Afghanistan and return refugees to the country;

Alleviate the consequences of the fratricide and accelerate socioeconomic development;

Persistent democratization of the Afghan political system;

The alliance of the democratic left parties of the Republic of Afghanistan undertakes the following principle tasks:

1. In the field of internal policy:

Respect and regard for the sacred religion of Islam and the laudable traditions and customs of our people;

All-round cooperation in achieving the aims of the democratic left for a coalition administration and the Afghan political system, and reciprocal consultation and exchange of information about the main activities related to the country's political, economic, social and cultural life;

Struggle for the unification of all national, democratic, progressive, and patriotic forces of the country;

Struggle for the solution of national problems and ensurance of the equality of political, economic, social, and cultural rights of all natonalities residing in the country in respect of their national and historic characteristics;

Reconsidering the country's administrative structure in respect of its historic and national characteristics;

Struggle against all manifestations of chauvinism and narrow-minded nationalism;

Reform and evolution of the country's state administrative system and struggle against bureaucratism; propagation and universalization of progressive, patriotic, and internationalist ideas which demonstrate the interests of toilers and the principles of social justice, humanism, and moral purity.

2. In the socioeconomic field:

Struggle for the betterment of the people's living conditions; development and strengthening of the state sector; encouragement of private investment for the development of the country's multisector national economy for the purpose of eliminating backwardness;

Efforts to achieve the industrialization of the country in order to ensure its economic independence;

Struggle for a just solution of the problem of land and water retention in view of the characteristics of various parts of the country, on the basis of strengthening the technical-financial base of agriculture;

Struggle for the elimination of social corruption;

Struggle for the flourishing of culture, eliminating illiteracy, teaching in mother tongues, and training national cadres for all nationalities;

Democratization of the mass media, especially the radio and television in the capital and provinces;

Training young people in the lofty valves of mankind, interesting them in useful social work, serving the people, loving the country, and having friendship with the progressive youth of the world;

Paying attention to the education of orphans and children who have no guardian.

3. In the field of foreign affairs:

Strengthening the stands of the Republic of Afghanistan in the international arena and raising its peace-seeking role in resolving important regional and international issues;

Comprehensive efforts aimed at ensuring that the foreign policy of the Republic of Afghanistan conforms with the stand of the nonaligned countries, taking into account the characteristic of our country in this Asian region;

Respect for the charter of the United National Organization and observing the principles of the International Convention on Human Rights;

Support for the struggle of the masses who fight for peace, national independence, democracy, and self-determination and against colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, reaction, racism, fascism, Zionism, and apartheid;

Campaign for ending the arms race, for disarmament, and for the defense of international peace; consistent efforts to strengthen the international ties of the Republic of Afghanistan, to expand and consolidate friendly relations with all the countries of the world, particularly with the neighboring countries;

Expand the relations of the left parties of the Republic of Afghanistan with the parties and social and international organizations which are in favor of peace, democracy, and social progress;

Respect the charter of the United Nations Organization and the principles of the Nonaligned Movement and the Declaration on Human Rights;

Struggle for a new economic system and international relations.

4. Principles and structural composition of the alliance of democratic left parties of the Republic of Afghanistan:

The PDPA, the Revolutionary Toilers Organization of Afghanistan, and the Toilers Organization of Afghanistan which accepted this political platform, act on the basis of ancient principles in structural composition.

The highest body of the alliance is the Coordination Council, in which three leading members of each party have membership. The Coordination Council will harmonize the joint activities of the democratic left parties of the Republic of Afghanistan based on joint decisions.

The decisions of the Coordination Council will be approved by the majority vote of the representatives of all the parties included in the Council. The execution of an approved decision by all the members of the democratic left parties is mandatory.

Approved decisions which concern state affairs will be presented to the president as a proposal by the democratic left alliance. The Coordination Council will meet regularly, at least once a month.

The time and place of the sessions will be fixed by agreement between the leadership of the concerned parties. The chairmanship of each session will be held in turn by the representatives included in the alliance.

Preparations for the sessions and arrangements for the implementation of the decisions taken by the coordination Council will be implemented by a working group.

The representatives of each party included in the democratic left alliance are the members of the working group. At present, two members from each party are included in the working group.

When necessary, the Coordination Council will form special commissions to carry out joint decisions. The period of activity and composition of these commissions will be decided by the Coordination Council in conformity with specific cases.

[Signed] The PDPA; the Revolutionary Toilers Organization of Afghanistan; the Toilers Organization of Afghanistan.

Hezbollah Leader Criticizes 7-Party Alli

LD260633 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0430 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 25, BAKHTAR—After the proclamation of the policy of national reconciliation and explaining that the Soviet troops will return home if international guarantees are given on non-interference of the foreign countries in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, we sent messages to the heads of the "seven-party alliance" and asked them to put an end to war and fratricide, said Mawlavi Abdul Halim Raqem [name as received], head of the Hezbollah "Party of God" in an interview.

3000 members of Hezbollah have been observing ceasefire after the announcement of the policy of national reconciliation, and the talks are continuing between Hezbollah and the state of the Republic of Afghanistan.

"But they rejected our Islamic proposal. For, they see their huge profit in the continuation of war and bloodshed in Afghanistan. So, the central board of Hezbollah decided to reach to understanding with state of the Republic of Afghanistan and to continue their national struggle openly and without meaningless bloodshed and fratricide", he noted.

In connection with the living conditions of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan, Mawlavi Raqem said: "From the beginning of the year 1979 till now the Afghan refugees live in the same tents. The large share of the aids received from different countries under the name of the refugees are spent by the responsibles of the "seven-party alliance" for erecting glorious buildings of their own, and putting into service transport lines inside and outside Pakistan."

When one week was passed from the announcement of the policy of national reconciliation, the "seven-party" called a rally of the Afghan refugees. More than one hundred thousand persons were gathered in this rally.

The Afghan refugees expected that the heads of the "seven-party alliance" would express their agreement with the policy of national reconciliation and would announce cease-fire.

But when the heads of "seven" showed their opposition to the cease-fire the people left the rally desperately.

After the "seven-party alliance" expressed their opposition to national reconciliation and cease-fire, the Afghan refugees staged protest demonstrations and rebellions.

Even some influential men within the "seven-party alliance" showed their opposition to the leaders of the "seven-party". A number of the commanders of Jimi[illegible] and Islamic parties who expressed their agreement to the policy of national reconciliation were punished, he said.

Najibullah, Others Discuss Returnees Commission
LD271921 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1700 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] With the participation of esteemed Najibullah, the Returnees' Affairs Coordinating Commission held a broad meeting at Golhana Palace today at the headquarters of the presidency in order to assess the commission's work, achievements, and experiences and to review new plans and methods for the massive return of the refugees.

At the beginning of the session, which was presided over by Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, Hasan Sharq, deputy prime minister and chairman of the Refugees Return State Committee, reported to the session on the committee's achievements and activities last year, the living conditions of the refugees, and plans and methods of preparation for the massive return of refugees during current year.

He also reported on the work of the ministries and related state organs and committees in the field of the return of refugees, and presented specific preparatory plans and proposals.

A BIA report adds that afterward Major General Shah Nawaz Tanai, Army chief of staff, on behalf of the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan, and Mashoq Wahab, deputy minister of logistics affairs of the Ministry of Interior Affairs; Muhammad Kabir, finance minister; Muhammad Khan Jalalar, minister of commerce; Abdul Rahim Karwal, caretaker of the Ministry of Transportation; Abdul 'Aziz Negahban, minister of civil aviation; Sher Bahadur, minister of public health; Nazar Muhammad, minister of construction affairs; and Abdul Haq, governor of Herat, on behalf their ministries and organs and related authorities presented their reports on the activities and achievements of theirs organs over the past year in connection with the reception of returnees. They made specific proposals in different socioeconomic fields for 1988.

The BIA reports that Esteemed Najibullah assessed the work of the broad session of the Returnees Affairs Commission. In a guiding speech drawing the attention of the members of the staff to their duties, he said:

The commission is convening at a time when world attention is focused on the Geneva talks on finding a solution to the situation around Afghanistan. We declare with pleasure that our refugee brothers who live outside have responded positively about their return to the country. Despite problems created by foreign rulers, 120,000 refugees have returned to the homeland.

Esteemed Najibullah, having pointed out the shortcomings, problems, and poor achievements of the related organs in connection with preparations for better conditions for the returnees, set out the obligations of related administrations and offices for creating a working program for the returnees and for providing ever more facilities for returnees and refugees in 1988.

Pakistani Militias Block Refugees' Return
LD252200 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 25 Mar 88

[text] The BIA military section reports that Pakistani militias take part in destructive and armed activities against the Republic of Afghanistan and prevent the return of the refugees.

At the present time, military delegations of the Pakistani Government have been sent to the training centers of armed opposition groups stationed in Pakistan.

They want to continue the undeclared war against the Republic of Afghanistan.

According to reliable information, the Pakistani Government has enclosed the refugee camps in barbed wire and has employed guards consisting of armed opposition extremists groups and Pakistani militias in the refugee camps in order to prevent their return.

They have formed new ethnic groups and dispatched them to the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this way they hope to be able to prevent the refugees' return.

Nine days ago, 16 families consisting of 85 of our compatriots freed themselves from the camps by accepting many difficulties and paying bribes. They were returning to their homes in the vicinity of Khostmaj District and were captured by a militia group following the orders of the Pakistani Government.

They were sent again to a camp called Taban, after insults and torture.

The ruling regime in Islamabad 8 days ago commissioned another group of militias and militarists in the region of (Galam Khan Qalay) to prevent the refugees' return.

The truth is that all the refugees are willing to return to their ancestral homeland, and the people of the free tribes also support this correct demand of the refugees.

Thousands of Wazir tribesmen recently organized a protest demonstration over the recent action by Pakistani Government and demanded that the obstacles be removed from the path of the refugees' return.

Many examples of such a demonstration have been seen in all the agencies of the free tribes, and even in the refugee camps.

National Front Session Discusses Elections

LD260638 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 25, BAKHTAR—The extraordinary session of the Executive Committee of National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan, in connection with participation of the councils of the National Front in the process of elections to the National Assembly of Afghanistan, was held here on Thursday.

The session considered elections to the National Assembly of Afghanistan as a manifestation of popular, peaceful and democratic characteristics of state power in Afghanistan.

The work plan of the National Front in the current year and the draft resolution of the front on its participation in the process of elections to the National Assembly were discussed and with some amendments both were approved.

Najibullah Speaks

LD261918 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, participated today in the seminar of the Central Election Commission of the National Assembly, which was held by the Afghanistan National Front at the Foreign Ministry's Storay Palace.

Esteemed Najibullah delivered an instructive speech at the seminar on the National Assembly elections, which are due to be held on 14 April throughout the country. He said:

The heroic people of Afghanistan are on the eve of an important historic event. They will elect representatives to the National Assembly in a democratic manner for the first time, and will give a positive response to the cry for peace which echoes in the hearts of thousands of our compatriots.

Esteemed Najibullah instructed all the state bodies and party and social organizations to use all their resources to cooperate with the Central Election Commission.

According to another report, a session of the National Assembly's Central Election Commission was held this afternoon at Delkosha Palace in order to prepare to hold elections.

The session was chaired by Abdorrahim Hatef, chairman of the National Front Central Council. A number of reports were presented to the session concerning measures and decisions aimed at holding elections, and necessary decisions were taken in this regard.

Chief of General Staff Reviews Operations

LD270616 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 26, OANA-BAKHTAR—By observing strictly the cease-fire regulations, the Armed Forces at the request of the inhabitants and commissions of national reconciliation crushed the armed and intransigent extremists in the last Afghan year began March 20, 1988, says General Shahnawaz Tanay, chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, in an interview to a military reporter of BAKHTAR. [sentence as received]

These extremists had violated cease-fire for 14,622 rpt 14,622 times, he added.

The villages and districts were mopped up from the infiltration of opposition armed groups, the convoys of the extremists with arms and munitions on board from Pakistan and Iran to the territory of Afghanistan were destroyed, he added.

Primary goods were supplied to the far-fledged areas of the country. As a result of such successful activities, a large number of extremists and opponents of peace and conciliation were ousted from the scene of subversive activities.

The Armed Forces of the country seized from the opposition over 3,000 rpt 3,000 light weapons, 340 rpt 340 heavy weapons, 16 ground-to-ground rocket launchers, seven assorted ground-to-air rocket launchers, 88 hideouts possessing arms and munitions and 5,647 rpt 5,647 assorted mines and a large amount of other arms and munitions.

Presently, over forty thousand persons some of whom formerly belonged to the opposition armed groups were organised in local forces and over 52 thousand persons were organised in border militias, General Shahnawaz Tanay said.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, General Tanay went on, with a high sense of responsibility to peace in the region and adherence to earlier accords has shown peaceful initiatives and political flexibility in Geneva, and thus is eagerly looking forward to its success.

The Armed Forces of Afghanistan at this juncture of time have acted as a scapegoat of defending the revolution and have played a valorous role for the realisation of the policy of national reconciliation.

The Armed Forces of the Republic, he added, have acquired a special strength and have been equipped with military, political and practicable experience. The Armed Forces are able to carry out successful combat activities in all parts of the country in case the enemies violate the cease-fire, General Tanay concluded.

'Terrorist' Group in Bamian Province 'Crushed'
LD261948 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] An armed extremist group which had been violating cease-fire conditions in Bamian Province, where it carried out terrorist operations and looted properties, was recently crushed by provincial security forces.

BAKHTAR reports that the people in the villages of Seyyedabad, Heydarabad, (Joi Shir), (Kalkrak), and (Qarayak) informed the security forces of Bamian Province about the extremist group's presence in their villages after consultation with the national reconciliation commission.

At the people's request, the provincial security forces took action and asked the extremist group to lay down its arms; however, the group persisted in its futile resistance by shooting.

The security forces retaliated in order to prevent its criminal acts. As a result, the terrorist group and its leader were crushed.

Islamabad Reports on Helmand Province Operations
BK280631 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0600 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] According to reports from Afghanistan, mujahidin have repulsed Soviet-Kabul troops from the (Sangian) District in Helmand Province after heavy fighting. The reports say that now no communist base or position exists in the district.

In another operation, mujahidin have closed down the highway linking Kabul with the Khyber Pass via Jalalabad. In this operation mujahidin killed 13 Afghan militiamen and took control of a security post along the highway in the Basawal area.

Bangladesh

Ershad Lists Government's Achievements
BK250420 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
0110 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] President Ershad has called for united endeavors to give further impetus to the extensive uplift pursuits now going on throughout the country to make life meaningful to all.

He was speaking at a discussion meeting on development in peace and progress held under the auspices of Jatiya Party in Dhaka yesterday. The meeting marked the conclusion of the 6th year of the present government.

The president said concerted endeavors during the last 6 years through various reforms and changes have given the nation a sense of direction for yet greater thrust for development.

The gains accomplished during the period through rural-oriented development approach have to be consolidated to ensure basic amenities like food, shelter, education, and medicare to all.

He described the 24th of March as the day of many successes and for taking a fresh vow to complete the unfinished tasks for ensuring a meaningful life to the people.

He said our achievements are noteworthy, but we have to traverse a long way to accomplish the goals set 6 years back to reach the fruits of independence to all.

Listing various achievements made during the period, the president said the foodgrains production, which was 1 crore tons in 1982, has now reached 1.65 crore tons; population growth reduced from 3.4 percent to 2.3 percent.

Power generation capacity rose from 700 megawatts to over 2,000 megawatts. Communications networks have been expanded, establishing a national grid of roads linking upazilas [subdistricts] and constructing many bridges.

He, however, said there are still many things to achieve. We have to remove poverty and illiteracy, ensure employment, attain food autarky, and give speed to industrialization.

We have no time to sit idle or locked in the dungeons of uncertainty and terrorism or disagreement. There should be a consensus on basic national question of progress, development, and justice.

Speaking on the occasion, Jatiya Party Secretary General and Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzam Hussain said the achievements made during the last 6 years are unprecedented in our national history.

Today, the government can say that it has done something for the teeming millions of the country.

Ershad Message on Eve of Independence Day
BK251630 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Excerpt] The nation will celebrate the independence and national day tomorrow in a befitting manner and with great enthusiasm. In a message on the occasion, President Ershad has called for taking fresh vow to dedicate ourselves for materializing the dreams of lakhs of shahid [martyrs].

The president has made a fervent call to the people from all walks of life irrespective of party affiliations or opinion to work unitedly to achieve the cherished goals imbued with the spirit of sacrifice, sincerity, and patriotism in a peaceful atmosphere.

He said despite considerable progress achieved in different spheres of society, there is no scope for complacence. Bangladesh is a land of enormous possibilities and it has patriotic and hardworking people. Our success lay in the proper coordination between the land and the man.

The president said the independence did not come as a gift for anybody, rather it came through an armed struggle. The day is not only an occasion for celebration, but also for understanding and self-analysis.

The significance of the day lay in the taking of firm pledge to make the independence meaningful. He said the just-concluded fourth parliamentary elections have given the democratic aspirations of the people a new dimension.

The holding of smooth, peaceful, and fair election was the bright example of political farsightedness and consciousness of our people.

The president prayed for the continued happiness, success, peace and prosperity of the people. [passage omitted]

Orders Release of Prisoners

BK260220 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] President Ershad has directed the authorities concerned to release various categories of prisoners on occasion of National and Independence Day as a general amnesty.

Earlier, the government announced the release of 875 prisoners from jail on the occasion of Independence Day. The government expressed the hope that those released will be respectful to the generosity of the government and try to contribute to make Bangladesh a happy and prosperous country.

Ershad Dismisses Council of Ministers 27 Mar

BK270436 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] President Hussain Mohammad Ershad today dissolved his Council of Ministers. An official announcement this morning said the president, under Article 58 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, has relieved the prime minister, deputy prime ministers, ministers, state ministers, and deputy ministers of their respective duties as members of the Council of Ministers.

Moudud Ahmed New Prime Minister

BK271442 Hong Kong AFP in English 1431 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Dhaka, March 27 (AFP)—President Hussain Mohammad Ershad Sunday appointed Moudud Ahmed as Bangladesh's new prime minister in charge of a 23-member cabinet.

State television said the president was administering the oath of office to the new cabinet at the presidential palace late Sunday.

Mr. Ahmed, 48, was deputy prime minister in the out-going cabinet. He replaces Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

New Council of Ministers

BK271619 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] A 32-member Council of Ministers was sworn in at a simple ceremony in Banga Bahavan [president's house] in Dhaka this evening. President Ershad administered the oath of office.

Mr Moudud Ahmed has been appointed prime minister and has been given the charge of the Ministry of Industries.

Three deputy prime ministers are: Dr M.A. Matin, (?Sports), Health and Family Planning; Kazi Zafar Ahmed, without portfolio and political adviser to the president; and Shah Moazzam Hussain, Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

The ministers and their portfolios are:

Mohammad Abdul Munim—Finance Minister;

Major General, Retired, Mahmudul Hasan—Agriculture;

M. Korban Ali—Jute;

Anisul Islam Mahmud—Education;

Sirajul Hussain Khan—Labor and Manpower;

Anwar Hussain Manzur—Communications;

Humayun Rashid Chowdhury—Foreign Affairs;

A .K. M. Moidul Islam—Shipping;

Air Vice Marshal, Retired, A.K. Khandokar—Planning;

Mahbubur Rahman—Information;

Maulana M.A. Mannan—Religious Affairs;

Sunil Gupta—Youth and Sports;

Zafar Imam—Textiles;

Sheikh Shahidul Islam—Works;

A. Sattar—Civil Aviation and Tourism;

Sardar Amjad Hussain—Food;

A.B.M. Gholam Mustafa—Energy and Mineral Resources;

Mustafa Kamal Haider—Land;

Mohammad Rezwanul Haq Chowdhury—Social Welfare and Women Affairs.

The state ministers and their portfolios are:

Major, Retired Iqbal Hussain Chowdhury—Post and Telecommunications;

Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu—Finance;

Lieutenant Colonel, Retired, H.M. A. Ghaffar—Commerce;

Mamdudur Rahman Chowdhury—Communications;

Kazi Firoze Rashid—Relief and Rehabilitation;

Mohammad (?Nazirur) Rahman Mian—Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives;

Nazimuddim (?al-Azan)—Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control;

A.B.M. Ruhul Amin Hawladar—Agriculture;

Abul Khair Chowdhury—Youth and Sports;

Benoy Kumar Dewan—adviser to the president on tribal affairs with rank and status and facilities of a minister.

Vice President A.K.M. Nural Islam, Speaker Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, chiefs of the three services, and high civil and military officials were present on the occasion.

Ershad Leaves on 4-Day Visit to Thailand

BK280730 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] President Ershad left Dhaka today for Bangkok on a 4-day state visit to Thailand. He was accompanied by Begum Roushan Ershad. Vice President Nurul Islam saw the president off at the Zia International Airport.

Among others Prime Minister Moudud Ahmed, Deputy Prime Ministers Professor M.A. Matin and Shah Moazzam Hussain, ministers, chiefs of three services, members of the parliament, diplomats,l and high civil and military officials were present.

Present Ershad was a given a guard of honor by combined armed services contingent. He took salute and inspected the guard.

The president's entourage included the deputy prime minister and his political adviser, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Foreign Minister Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, Shipping Minister A.K.M. Moidul Islam, Energy and Minister Resources Minister, A.B.M. Gholam Mustafa.

A 20-member cultural troupe also accompanied the president.

Our representative adds the first ever state visit to Thailand by President Ershad takes place at the invitation of Thai King Phumiphon Adunyadet and Queen Sirikit.

President Pays Official Visit to Thailand

For Bangkok coverage of President Hussain Mohammad Ershad's official visit to Thailand see the Thailand section of the 28 March East Asia DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

AFP: 52 Injured in Dhaka Violence 25 Mar

BK260525 Hong Kong AFP in English 0405 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Dhaka, March 26 (AFP)—Home-made bombs and political violence have left 52 people injured in Bangladesh, press reports said here Saturday.

In Dhaka's Lalbagh District, police took a young boy and his sister to hospital Friday after they were seriously injured by a home-made bomb thrown at their house, the reports said.

In western Sirajganj District, unidentified assailants threw bombs at a local fair, wounding 35 people, five of them seriously, the reports said.

In west Chapainawab Ganj District, 15 people were injured in clashes between supporters of the rightwing Jamiyat-i Islami Party and local rivals, the reports said.

India

Sikhs Claim Responsibility for Jabalpur Blast

BK260653 Hong Kong AFP in English 0621 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] New Delhi, March 26 (AFP)—A Sikh militant group has claimed responsibility for blowing up a missile dump in the central Indian State of Madhya Pradesh, press reports said here Saturday.

The extremist Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) said in a statement from the Sikh holy city of Amritsar that it had blown up the Jabalpur town ordnance depot Wednesday, UNITED NEWS OF INDIA (UNI) said.

KCF Deputy Chief Malkiat Singh Ajnala said his group had planned to sabotage the missile dump six months ago but were only able to carry out the attack this week, UNI said.

Defence Ministry officials here said an investigation has been ordered into the blast at the dump where several types of missiles and thousands of artillery shells, stored in two magazines, were destroyed.

"We are not ruling out sabotage," the officials said amid reports that military intelligence agents were checking the KCF claim.

Seven people were injured when the arms dump exploded, causing panic in Jabalpur town.

The Madhya Pradesh state administration evacuated hundreds of people from the area and halted civilian air traffic as the dump burned until Friday.

Many KCF separatists are wanted for murder and arson in Punjab where Sikh militants are battling for a homeland called Khalistan (Land of the Pure).

Terrorists Kill 12 in Amritsar District 27 Mar

BK280306 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] In Punjab, 12 persons were shot dead in separate incidents in Amritsar District last night. Five persons, including four members of a family, were gunned down inside the house in village Manwal under Lapoke police station.

In the second incident a Punjab police head constable and his brother were shot dead in village Chimabagh under Beas police station. A child was also injured in this incident.

In another incident, three persons were gunned down in a shootout at a brick kiln in village (Hankasil). In yet another incident two persons were shot dead in village (Zaidul Leila).

Arms, Rocket-Launchers Unearthed in Punjab

BK280802 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] The Punjab police unearthed two big arm dumps of terrorists during raids in two villages in Amritsar District yesterday. This is the biggest catch of terrorist arms in Punjab.

The additional director general of police, K.P.S. Gill, told newsmen in Chandigarh that arms and ammunition were stored in underground concrete bunkers.

He said some machines suspected to be rocket launchers have also been recovered from the godown. Mr Gill said some persons have been arrested in this connection.

Chinese Assault Rifles Seized

BK281036 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] In the northern state of Punjab, police unearthed two big arms dumps of terrorists during raids in two villages in Amritsar District yesterday.

This is the biggest catch of terrorist arms in Punjab. The additional director general of police, Mr Gill, told newsmen in Chandigarh that arms and ammunition were stored in underground concrete bunkers. The cache includes 22 Chinese assault rifles.

Ghisingh Calls for Peace; Violence Continues

BK271603 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] The GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] leader, Mr Subash Ghisingh, has called upon his supporters to abstain from violence in the hill areas of Darjeeling.

He made this appeal in Darjeeling today. Mr Ghisingh also hoped that the West Bengal government will take a positive attitude toward this initiative.

Meanwhile, West Bengal minister of state for hill affairs, Mr Dawa Lama, has said that the Center and the state government are trying to solve the problems facing the hill areas through the formation of a hill development council.

Addressing a meeting at Sonada, he said a draft bill on it will be introduced during the current assembly session.

According to police, GNLF activists threw a bomb at the meeting injuring five persons. In another incident at Kalimpong, one CRPF jawan [Central Reserve Police Force soldier] was stabbed and hospitalized in a serious condition.

Three hard-core GNLF activists were arrested from the Kalimpong market following a raid.

Airport Gunman Suspected Abu Nidal Group Member

BK251602 Hong Kong AFP in English 1540 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Excerpts] New Delhi, March 25 (AFP)—A suspected member of the Abu Nidal terrorist group Friday shot and wounded an Italian pilot and threw two grenades at Bombay's international airport, police said.

The gunman burst into a coach transporting 12 Alitalia crew from Bombay's Sahar Airport to a hotel and fired four shots at the pilot shortly after the flight arrived from Sydney via Singapore, Bombay police said by telephone.

Bombay special branch detectives said the man had given his name as 'Abbas Muhammed 'Ali Shahadi, adding that he might be a member of the Abu Nidal terrorist group.

The man carried no travel documents and had refused to give any further details as to his identity or nationality, the detectives said. The man later said he was Lebanese when he appeared before additional chief metropolitan magistrate R.N. Borulkar in Bombay.

He was charged under India's anti-terrorist laws and remanded in police custody until May 23, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

Earlier reports said the gunman was an Iranian.

The detectives said preliminary investigations showed the shooting of the Italian pilot was perhaps a case of mistaken identity and that the gunman might have thought he belonged to Air France.

A French Embassy spokesman here said French firms in India had been directed some time ago to take precautions against possible terrorist attack. Air France officials were not immedietely available for comment.

Federal intelligence agencies said Indian airports have been alerted to guard against similar attacks.

After shooting the pilot the gunman jumped off the coach and threw two grenades at the airport arrival lounge before running towards a taxi-stand. [passage omitted]

The two grenades failed to explode and Army experts later defused them after evacuating the area, police said.

The experts said the grenades were of the same make as those found Wednesday at the Saudi Arabian Consulate in Bombay. A watchman at the consulate found two foreign-made grenades and two bottles containing inflammable liquid which were taken away by police who did not identify where the grenades were manufactured.

An earlier report that police had found the grenades Wednesday in a Saudi Arabian diplomat's bag at the airport was incorrect.

Police have launched a major manhunt for suspected associates of the gunman and deployed detectives at the port city's main exits, police said. "It appears the group wants to strike here and spread panic and terror," an officer said.

Federal Intelligence Bureau officials in New Delhi said they have sent available pictures of Abu Nidal group terrorists believed to operate in the region to Bombay and added that Interpol had been alerted.

Report on Sending Army to Kabul Denied

BK260300 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The Indian Embassy in Islamabad has denied a report in a Pakistani daily that the Indian Army has been sent to Kabul. A press note issued by the embassy expressed surprise and regret at the false and mischievous report.

Pant Comments on Pakistan Nuclear Technology

BK261636 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, has said India cannot ignore Pakistan acquiring nuclear capability. He said the nation is alive to the security requirements in view of the tension created in the subcontinent by the flow of sophisticated weapons in our neighborhood.

He was presiding over a lecture on national security and modern technology in New Delhi today.

Mr Pant said the term national security includes political stability, economic growth and defense preparedness. He emphasized the need to focus attention on indigenization with updating knowledge of the latest technological development.

Delivering the keynote lecture, the renowned scientist Dr Raja Ramanna said an entirely new approach toward world disarmament is required to counter the growing menace of terrorism.

He said that despite strong defense forces, victory cannot be ensured unless morale and internal security are of a high order.

State Minister on Defense Production Advances

BK231259 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] India has developed semicombustible cartridge cases for the ammunition used in tanks and artillery guns. The minister of state for defense, Mr Santosh Mohan Dev, told the Lok Sabha that this major technological breakthrough has been achieved by the Defense Research and Development Organization.

He also informed the House that the surface-to-air missile system—Akash—and the third generation antitank missile system—Nag—are being developed indigenously.

Ershad Move To Create Islamic Republic Noted

BK240919 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] The government has expressed the hope that Bangladesh President Ershad's move to make his country an Islamic republic will not affect the minorities there.

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, told the Rajya Sabha that the government's attention has been drawn to reports of an announcement that a bill to make Bangladesh an Islamic republic will be introduced in that country's parliament.

The minister said while this is an internal matter of Bangladesh, India hopes that this will not affect the position of the minorities in that country.

Iran

ICO Delegate Taskhiri Explains Walkout

LD271054 Tehran IRNA in English 1031 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Damascus, March 27, IRNA—"The U.S., the reactionary Arabs and the Hijaz [Saudi] regime had created an anti-Islamic revolution of Iran atmosphere in the recently concluded conference of foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference", said Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad 'Ali Tashkiri who represented Iran in the session.

Speaking in a press conference at the Iranian Embassy here Saturday he said that security officers at Amman airport ransacked briefcases of the Iranian delegation and confiscated their papers upon arrival, and suppressed the news of the arrival of the Iranian delegates.

Criticising the OIC resolution he said that it was not concerned with issues of the Islamic community and that the participants were after ways of elevating their ties with the U.S. to the level of the U.S.-Zionist regime relations. Such a resolution could not be acceptable to the Islamic community, he stressed.

The Iranian delegation, he told reporters walked out of the conference because it could neither tolerate the way the conference was conducted nor was it given a chance to speak up.

The conference did not even bother to raise the message of Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on massacre of thousands of Iraqi Kurds by chemical warfare.

In addition, said Hojjat ol-Eslam Tashkiri, the conference did not come up with a practical proposal for ending the Iraqi-imposed-war. "Yet it praised the Iraqi regime for having committed aggression against Iran and encouraged the U.S. to exert more pressure on Iran to make it accept UN Resolution 598."

As for the last July massacre of the hajj pilgrims in holy Mecca by Saudi officials, Hojjat ol-Eslam Tashkiri said that the matter must be studied by religious experts and not foreign ministers of the Islamic countries. However, the Saudis manipulated the session in a way that this factor was not taken into account.

As for stance of the conference towards the Iraqi chemical bombardment of Halabjah he said that it uttered no word in this respect.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Tashkiri made it clear that the walking out of the conference by the Iranian delegation does not mean that the Islamic Republic of Iran has pulled out of the OIC. Iran will participate in the next session scheduled in Saudi Arabia, he concluded.

Assails Jordanians' Behavior

JN261524 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The head of the Iranian delegation to the ICO foreign ministers' conference Mohammad 'Ali Tashkiri held a news conference in Damascus today in which he stated that the Jordanian authorities searched his personal portfolio at Amman airport and impounded important documents from it.

Radio Commentary on Meeting

LD261411 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1110 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Political commentary]

[Excerpts] Our political commentary is about the resolution issued by the Islamic foreign ministers conference, which ended yesterday by issuing a resolution. The conference was attended by representatives of 45 Islamic states. As a result of a reactionary collusion, a resolution, which does not guarantee the interests or aspirations of Muslims, was passed. It delivers an irreparable blow at the prestige of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO].

The conference began on Monday in Jordan's capital, Amman, with a speech by Shah Husayn, and its several sessions reviewed and discussed a selection of 78 topics. [passage omitted]

As expected, the Political Committee of the ICO, on the basis of a reactionary-arrogant collusion, inserted certain points in the resolution, which were formally against the Islamic Republic of Iran and in line with the policies of the United States and Israel. This committee refused to take any Islamic and progressive measure to support Islamic struggles of the Muslim community, and dropped such issues from its agenda.

Following the exposure of this reactionary-arrogant collusion, the Islamic Republic of Iran delegation, by submitting a note to the ICO secretary general, withdrew from the conference.

A note submitted to Pirzada, the Pakistani secretary general of the conference, states: The Iranian delegation realizes that some governments have put pressure on this

conference in order to realize their particular objectives. On this basis the Iranian delegation declares its total aversion toward the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers.

Justification of this approach became clear yesterday when the conference issued its final resolution. The resolution made reference to various issues, including last year's bloody tragedy in Mecca, the Iraqi-imposed war against Iran, the Palestine, Lebanon, and Afghanistan issues—which clearly demonstrate the reactionary-arrogant position of the conference in the face of some problems and difficulties of the Islamic ummah. Concerning the imposed war, the resolution praised the Iraqi 'Aflaqi regime for its efforts, and called on the Security Council—should Iran refuse to give a positive reply to Resolution No 598—to adopt other measures against Iran.

The articles of the resolution on the imposed war can never be viewed as the adoption of an Islamic position against the war. This is the position of a handful of governments which, contrary to Islamic interests, are pursuing their own objectives. How can one justify the silence of the conference in the face of the crimes committed by the Iraqi 'Aflaqi regime—the extensive use of chemical weapons against civilians, particularly the massacre of the liberated city of Halabjah—and the crimes of the Saddam regime in attacking Iranian cities, crimes which have created anger and revulsion throughout the world?

The silence of the Islamic conference vis-a-vis these crimes is clear proof of the lack of credibility of it and its resolutions. Other articles of the Amman resolution further proves this lack of credibility.

The resolution refers to last year's bloody incidents in Mecca. The Iranian pilgrims have been accused of instigating this tragedy and violating the sanctity and respect of God's house. At the same time, the Saudi regime is praised and supported for this tragedy [as heard]. This position of the conference, that is, the misrepresentation of facts related to Mecca's bloody tragedy and endorsement of the Saudi crimes in the divine sanctuary, clearly demonstrates how a handful of governments have used this conference to serve their particular policies and objectives. Their influence is so clear and undeniable that its signs are observed in every section of the final resolution of Amman.

For instance, in one section the resolution approved the demand of the Saudi regime that fewer pilgrims should go to Mecca next year, and a quota be given to each Islamic country on the basis of their population. The Saudi regime used a pretext that some construction work is underway and some early Islamic buildings are being renovated. The Islamic conference, without analyzing every conspiratorial aspect of this plan of the Saudi regime, approved it. It was necessary for this conference to adopt an Islamic position to oppose and seriously confront this policy of the Saudi regime, which is trying to eradicate Islamic monuments in Mecca and Medinah, to destroy the Islamic culture of these two cities. It should have prevented the Saudi regime from resorting to such a move. [passage omitted]

The position of the Islamic foreign ministers' conference on the Palestine issue is reactionary and arrogant. Taking no notice of the Islamic and heroic struggles of the Muslim people of Palestine, which have brought the Zionists to their knees, the conference repeated the usual reactionary and U.S.-approved rhetoric, and by endorsing the articles of the resolution issued by the treacherous Arab summit in Jordan, called for a solution to the Palestine problem by way of convening an international meeting, talks, and compromise.

The resolution of the 17th conference of Arab [as heard] foreign ministers, with its reactionary and anti-Islamic position, has convinced Muslims in general that the ICO, in holding the Amman conference, took another step toward disgrace and blatant treachery. By ignoring the main problems and difficulties of the Islamic world and the escalating struggle of Muslims, it has inflicted an irreparable blow to its previously waning prestige.

Musavi-Ardabili Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD252227 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 25, IRNA—Chief Justice Ayatollah Musavi-Ardabili said here today that no schemes by Iraq has served to push Iran to a compromise of principles in its war with Iraq. He said even a continued war of the cities will not being Saddam Husayn more fruits than it has brought during the past few years.

Ayatollah Musavi-Ardabili who was speaking to a multitudinous group of worshippers at the compounds of Tehran University here as a substitute leader of Friday congregational prayers blasted the UN Security Council and responsible world bodies for turning a deaf ear to Iran's pleas and for failing to compel the Iraqi Government to observe international conventions regarding civilians' lives.

He said as foreign reporters visited the Iraqi city Halabjah west of the Iraq-Iran border and news of the Iraqi deployment of chemical and toxic weapons was published foreign governments responded solely by showing conventional gestures of concern in a manner utterly inconsistent with the magnitude of the Iraqi crimes on civilians in the liberated city.

The chief justice said that for sometime before the Islamic Revolution the foreign powers tended to think of the Iranians as a nation of metamorphosed people brainwashed and alienated from their Islamic culture, but that later as the Islamic Revolution gained impetus they realized that here is a nation inspired by Islam and loyal

to the values of Islam. He said the foreign powers do not dread Iran's military hardware but rather the religious faith among the Iranians which make them steadfast and unyielding in their struggle.

The ayatollah criticized the UN Security Council for turning a blind eye at Iraq's deployment of lethal chemical weapons against thousands of civilians in Halabjah of Iraq, and for bringing up the issue of the UN Resolution 598 as though Iran's dismissal of the resolution posed more threat than Baghdad's unlimited licence to engage in mass killings of civilians.

He said such crimes against harmless civilians by the Baghdad government warrant a more serious response by the world governments than mere expressions of concern, and that such mild responses as shown by foreign governments towards the chemical bombardment of people in Halabjah serve only as a pat on the shoulder of the criminals in Iraq.

Elsewhere in his sermon the chief justice criticized representatives of Muslim states at the Islamic Conference in Amman earlier this month for having assembled to disapprove demonstrations by pilgrims during the annual Muslim rituals in Mecca, while apparently turning deaf ears and blind eyes to the plight of the Palestinians and to the plights of Muslims throughout the world.

He commented also that the number of civilians suffering from chemical burns is far too great for Iran to handle, and called on foreign governments to provide Iran any necessary medical assistance in the interest of afflicted victims.

Reportage, Commentary on Use of Toxic Gases

Commentary Assails Iraq

LD261013 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The Central News Unit reports that UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar admitted last night that the Zionist Iraq regime has used chemical weapons. In his statement, Perez de Cuellar said there was serious and considerable evidence that Iraq has employed chemical weapons against the Iranian and Iraqi peoples, and that a large number of lives were lost in that tragedy. Perez de Cuellar made it clear that he condemns the use of chemical weapons.

Although many diplomatic and media sources view Perez de Cuellar's statement as a direct and categorical condemnation of the Iraqi regime, some observers feel that the secretary general's stance toward the massacre of 5,000 people and the injury of another 5,000 with chemical weapons is not enough. They note that under the 1925 Geneva Convention banning the use of chemical weapons, the 1948 convention banning genocide, and accepted principles of human rights, the secretary general has an obligation to take a more severe position toward the crimes of the Iraqi regime.

According to diplomatic sources, the secretary general's statement focuses on three important points: First, the secretary general has raised the question of the Zionist Iraqi regime's use of chemical weapons as an independent issue for the first time; second, the secretary general has named Iraq specifically for the first time, and holds the Baghdad regime responsible for the use of chemical weapons; third, he has condemned the use of chemical weapons.

Despite all this, the statement falls far short of international expectations, and the UN secretary general's duty remains unchanged. UN observers also point out that if the secretary general's move is a prelude to additional actions by him, the Security Council, and other international bodies, there will be reason to hope that, at long last, international organizations have accepted the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran has the right and responsibility to defend itself in the face of Baghdad's crimes.

UN Team To Investigate

LD261318 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, we draw your attention to a report on the dispatch of a UN delegation of experts to inspect Saddam's crimes in the chemical bombardment of the city of Halabjah.

After growing public pressure on international organizations to condemn the Iraqi regime's recent crimes in the chemical massacre of civilians, and in light of requests for a UN delegation of experts to visit the region, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar has agreed to send such a team to Iran. In a meeting with Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati, the Islamic Republic's envoy to the United Nations, he announced that the fact-finding team would arrive in Tehran on Monday. Before that decision was revealed, the secretary general issued a statement noting that Iraq had employed chemical weapons against the Iranian and Iraqi peoples. He also condemned the use of chemical weapons. [passage omitted]

At a news conference in UN Headquarters, the Islamic Republic's ambassador to the United Nations explained that Iraq's chemical crime was not confined to the city of Halabjah, but included the territory of the Islamic Republic as well. The silence and inaction of the United Nations will not only lead to the disappearance of the evidence that chemical weapons were used in the region, but will reassure Iraq and encourage it to continue its crimes.

Speaker Cables Counterparts

LD261735 Tehran IRNA in English 1720 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani cabled messages to his counterparts in other countries around the globe Saturday, calling on them to condemn the Baghdad regime for massacring residents of the Iranian liberated town of Halabjah and its nearby villages in northeastern Iraq.

In his message, the speaker described the Iraqi regime's chemical bombardment of Halabjah town and its vicinity—liberated by Iran in the Val-Fajr-10 operations last week—as a "Bitter and most gruesome ever tragedy" which has shocked world public opinion. It is unprecedented anywhere around the world that a regime (Baghdad's Ba'thist clique), instead of trying to comfort its people, slaughters them so brutally and so cold-bloodedly, he said.

The Majlis speaker also noted how Iran's Muslim forces stopped their advance during the operations and put all their logistical, medical and foodstuff possibilities at the disposal of people of a country with which they are practically at war, braving the Iraqi regime's savage chemical bombardment.

The Baghdad regime's criminal slaughter of its own citizens with toxic gases is even more hateful than the U.S.' atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Hitler's massacres in Nazi occupied Europe and the carnage in occupied Palestine, Cambodia and Vietnam, he said.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani noted that Baghdad's criminal Ba'thist clique supported overtly and covertly by international bodies claiming to be advocates of human rights has badly damaged the organizations' credibility before the world.

Elsewhere in the message, the speaker termed the Ba'thist regime's use of mustard and nerve gases against the defenceless inhabitants of Halabjah a sign of its "spite and anger" towards the Iraqi public.

He then censured world bodies such as the U.N. and its Security Council for being totally indifferent towards the plight of the innocent and homeless residents of Halabjah even a week after the ghastly Iraqi crime, and also for their efforts to whitewash the crime.

Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani drew the attention of his counterparts to the fact that arrogant powers still continue to assist this symbol of tyranny and aggression (Iraqi regime) which enjoys Soviet and French possibilities for its attacks on civilian quarters.

Despite the visit to Halabjah by a group of mindful foreign reporters, the U.S. and French leaders falsely accused Iran of using chemical arms in their vain bid to mislead public opinion and to whitewash the Iraqi regime's heinous crime, he said, adding that the plot failed.

Rafsanjani's message also mentioned the fact that Halabjah citiziens unanimously refused an Iranian proposal to send them back to any part of Iraq they wished to return. This clearly belies all such claims against the Islamic Republic, he added.

Repeating the fact that Iran's Muslim combatants diverted all their facilities to help the Halabjah residents, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said "these heroies are worthy of the highest praise and any attempt to play down the epic is a treason against the values of humanity. [no closing quotation mark as received]

The Majlis speaker's message to his counterparts around the world is accompanied by a copy of a film of the ghastly Iraqi crime.

Speaker on Iraq's 'Crimes'

LD271736 Tehran IRNA in English 1730 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Majlis speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said today that the Iranian people are now witnessing the total collapse of Iraqi ruler Saddam (Husayn), his supporters and the Ba'th party, both on the political and military fronts.

The speaker, addressing a group of combatants here, said that Saddam is perpetrating "hysterical" crimes in a desperate bid to wreak vengeance on both the Iranian and Iraqi peoples because he is well aware the two Muslim nations will cooperate in the future for the cause of Islam.

Although the Iraqi ruler knows very well that the so-called war of cities is not in his interest because so many Iraqi cities are well within the range of Iranian artillery fire, yet he is adamant that nothing should be left intact after him, noted the speaker.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, referring to the enthusiasm with which Iran's Muslim combatants were greeted by Halabjah inhabitants during the liberation of the Iraqi town, said the world is pretending to be blind and is trying to ignore this grand spectacle.

The speaker who is also Imam Khomeyni's representative to the Supreme Defence Council (SDC) said the Ba'thist regime's massacre of Iraqi people who have been burdened with enormous cost of the Ba'thist Army and Air Force was a criminal blunder which he said has served to widen the gap between Iraqi regime and the Iraqi Muslim people.

Musavi-Ardabili Letter to UN

LD262250 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] In a letter to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar noting the repeated use of chemical weapons by the Iraqi regime and the martyring of over 5,000 defenseless people of the Iraqi city of Halabjah, as well as the poisoning of thousands more, together with the lack of any serious response by the international circles community, Musavi-Ardabali, president of the Supreme Defense Council, stressed: The silence maintained by the international community and the irresponsible attitude of the UN Security Council have surprised the freedom-lovers of the world and is an illogical position that contravenes legal precedents and international regulations.

In his letter, the chief justice thanks the UN secretary general for his condemnation of the Iraqi regime and the dispatch of a UN delegation of experts to review this calamity. He also demands punishment for the perpetrator of this crime and an arms embargo against the Iraqi regime, in addition to a ban on the export of chemical and bacteriological weapons to Iraq or their production in a number of Iraqi cities.

Health Minister Petitions WHO

LD241540 Tehran IRNA in English 1319 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 24, IRNA—Health Minister Dr. 'Ali Reza Marandi today called on the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Dr. Halfdan Mahler to send a team of experts to visit victims of the Iraqi chemical attacks undergoing treatment in Iranian hospitals.

In his message Marandi said that the criminal Iraqi regime has martyred and wounded thousands of residents of Iranian liberated Halabjah, by its intense chemical bombardment of the town.

He also called on Mahler to set forth the issue of dangerous effects of chemical weapons on human health in the forthcoming session of the WHO Executive Board.

UK Asked To Treat Victims

LD261840 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The Central News Unit reports that the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in London yesterday met with Robert Young, the Foreign Office official in charge of the Middle East Department. During the meeting our charge d'affaires described the crimes of the Zionist Iraqi regime in using chemical weapons against the people of Halabjah and offered him a number of photographs documenting the murder of the Iraqi Kurds by Saddam's regime. He then discussed the question of transferring victims of these chemical attacks to Britain for further treatment.

Mr Young, while condemning the Iraqi regime for the use of chemical weapons, declared his country's readiness to accept the victims and said that the British Red Cross is prepared to help. Referring to the war of the cities, he said: Since Iraq resumed the war of the cities we have condemned it.

Musavi on Public Mourning

LD260816 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi here Friday described silence of international organizations towards Iraqi chemical bombardment of Iraqi Kurds as unprecedented.

In a brief interview with the state television he said the international bodies and the UN under various excuses have kept silent in this respect. He urged world nations to protest Iraq's carnage of civilians in Halabjah.

The premier added that following a statement by Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri declaring Saturday as a national mourning day in commemoration of the victims of the Iraqi chemical bombardment of Kurdish city of Halabjah the government also declares Saturday a day of mourning. He added that all government offices will be open on Saturday.

Musavi Comments on Cities War, Halabjah

LD261810 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Musavi has granted an exclusive interview to the head of the news unit of Turkish television's Channel 2. He answered questions on the imposed war, the Halabjah tragedy, the response from international organizations and the UN secretary general, and the Security Council's position on this matter.

On the war of the cities, the prime minister said: Our position concerning the war of the cities is defensive, and we object to the war of the cities in principle. We respond only when necessary, and will give our real answer on the battlefield. Just as we showed in recent operations, so we will show in the future, too, that our real answer will come at the fronts.

As for the UN secretary general's proposal that the Islamic Republic of Iran send a representative to the organization, the prime minister stated: We are waiting to see what position the UN secretary general and Security Council take on the Halabjah tragedy. Our response will be linked to that reaction.

During the interview with the head of the news unit of Turkey's Channel 2, who produces a special political feature watched by many, Musavi remarked: In the past 9 years we have become suspicious of international organizations because of their attitude toward us. There was no discernible trace of an inclination to justice in any of their initiatives. We continue to fight in accordance with our principles. We are not keeping the war going simply for its own sake, and we are ready to accept fair solutions. We will welcome any organizations moving in this direction, but will oppose any move that treats the aggressor and the oppressed as equals, and we will, as always, respond on the battlefield. The recent victorious operation at the fronts has proved that we will not yield to international pressure. Our triumph in the "Val Fajr-10" actions has confirmed that military victory is possible in this war.

Musavi Addresses Cabinet on Resistance, ICO

LD271727 Tehran IRNA in English 1717 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi today described the new solar hejira year 1367 (started March 21) as the year of "resistance" in the face of political and military attacks of enemies of the Islamic revolution.

The premier, speaking at a cabinet session here, said that recent victories of Iran's Muslim combatants on the battlefields, have brought the possibility of an Iranian military victory and punishment of the aggressor closer, despite the feverish propaganda of imperialist mouthpieces.

Musavi, saying that Iran's Muslim people are now more determined than ever to continue their sacred defence, noted that historical and revolutionary experience shows that a nation which has no fear of pressures or propaganda and which is firm in its avowed principles emerges victorious in the world of today.

He also stressed on the resistance of Iranian people against the savage Iraqi attacks on cities and towns, and said the government and nation are now determined to stand firm no matter how long the enemy continues its crimes.

Musavi, commenting on the meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in Amman, said that the meet when hosted by such U.S. lackeys as King Husayn is certainly not a source of pride for Islamic countries.

He noted that the atmosphere which prevailed at the OIC conference in Amman once again demonstrated that the Islamic revolution derives its support from the peoples but not the regimes.

It is really a shame for such organizations to remain silent towards the Iraqi regime's ghastly crime in massacring its own people in Halabjah and to support the carnage of innocent pilgrims in Mecca by Washington's subservients for chanting anti-U.S. and anti-Zionist slogans, noted Musavi.

Meanwhile, minister of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) Mohsen Rafiqdust presented the cabinet with a report on the victorious "Val-Fajr-10" operations which resulted in the liberation of 1,400 square kms of northern Iraqi territory and heavy damage to Iraq's war machine.

Foreign Minister To Visit Greece 28 March

LD261205 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Following an official invitation from Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias, Foreign Minister Velayati will pay a 3-day official visit to Greece, beginning 28 March. The visit is in return for the visit Papoulias made to Iran last year. During his visit, Velayati will meet with senior Greek officials, and hold talks on deepening and developing bilateral relations and an important international issues.

Elections Headquarters Issues Statement

LD281126 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] The country's elections headquarters has issued a statement on the importance of the Majlis elections and their role in deciding the destiny of our Islamic society, and on the special sensitivity of those elections at this time when the people's solid nationwide participation in the elections at the height of the atrocities of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution is an important duty in deciding the country's political fate, would provide a crushing response to the enemy and would also be a clear sign of their firm resolve to continue their struggle until final victory. It announced: The Interior Ministry has completed preparations and a comprehensive program. It will hold elections for the third Majlis session regardless of the situation. All organizations, departments, and mass media will also continue to provide essential services to facilitate greater preparedness and to provide suitable opportunities for the people to elect the deputies of their choice. The Interior Ministry will deal with any move aimed at creating suspicion among the people and at preventing them from voting.

The statement of the country's elections headquarters says: In accordance with the constitution, the names of all the candidates whose qualifications have been approved by executive groups will be announced in the mass media by the governorates. On that basis the people may vote for the candidates of their choice. Only when the qualifications of some candidates have not been

approved by executive groups and when those candidates have lodged a complaint with supervisory commissions will those cases be reviewed by the supervisory commissions. The results, if they confirm the qualification of the candidates for election, will be communicated to the governorates, which will then announce the results to the public.

Missile Strikes, Ground Operations Continue

85 Casualties in Miandoab

LD260531 Tehran IRNA in English 0525 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Orumiyeh, W. Azarbayjan Prov., March 26, IRNA—At least 33 civilians were martyred and 52 injured in the Iraqi air raid on residential quarters of Miandoab at 13:05 hours local time (09:35 GMT) Friday.

Two Iraqi fighters bombed six civilian areas of the town.

Iraqi Jet Downed Near Borujerd

LD260537 Tehran IRNA in English 0527 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Khorramabad, Lorestan Prov., March 26, IRNA—Iranian anti-aircraft fire shot down an Iraqi war plane near Borujerd Friday afternoon. Several Iraqi fighters pounded residential quarters of the town as a result of which 80 people were martyred or wounded.

Efforts are under way to find the pilot of the Iraqi plane.

A historical monument, a mosque, a girls school and several vehicles suffered damage.

Iraqi Positions Bombed

LD261046 Tehran IRNA in English 1042 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—Iranian warplanes in six sorties Saturday morning pounded Iraqi concentration centers in "Val-Fajr-10" operation region, north eastern Iraq, and returned safely to bases, said a Joint Staff statement.

In other missions the Iranian fighters heavily bombarded Iraqi fortifications and troop concentration sites in eastern Basra operational theater.

Iraqi Aircraft Bomb Ilam

LD261047 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Aircraft of the Zionist Iraqi regime bombed several residential areas in the city of Ilam this morning. According to initial reports, a number of residential and commercial buildings were damaged in the raid. There has been no information on the possible number of martyrs or wounded.

IRGC Attacks Oil Jetties

LD261031 Tehran IRNA in English 1029 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—Naval forces of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps attacked Iraqi forces in Al-'Amayah and Al-Bakr jetties last night inflicting substantial casualties on them.

Iraqi gunboats were reportedly forced to flee the battle scene.

Air Force Bombs Troops

LD261111 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] The proud and brave pilots of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force at 0610, 0615, 0830, 0930, 1020, 1120, 1125, 1240, 1300, and 1310 today with their fighter-bomber aircraft and in support of the victorious operations of the combatants of Islam, bombed Iraqi troop concentrations in the "Val-Fajr-10" operational area. At 1100 and 1105 they severely bombarded enemy fortifications and troop concentrations in the operational area east of Basra. After inflicting heavy casualties and losses on the Zionist Iraqi forces, they all returned safely to base.

Kurds Attack Iraqi Bases

LD261156 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] According to Ramadan Headquarters, the center for the direction of the irregular warfare, during the past few days the IRGC's Ground Forces, the Kurdish Hizballah peshmerga of Iraq, have attacked six Saddamist mercenary bases in the general areas of Mirghuzar, (Sirwan) and (Gildaghan) in Iraq's Irbil Province. As well as destroying these bases, they killed or wounded over 50 of the Iraqi Ba'th Army's forces, and captured a substantial amount of light arms and ammunition.

The Kurdish Hizballah peshmerga of Iraq also infiltrated the city of Dahuk, destroying an enemy military vehicle, and killing First Lieutenant ('Azzaydar), deputy bureau chief of the Zionist Iiraqi regime's security organization in Dahuk, and four of his companions, who played a major role in the massacre of the Kurdish fighters in that region.

Iraqi Sukhoi-22 Jet Downed

LD261655 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] According to a statement issued by the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a Sukhoi-22 belonging to the aggressor regime of Iraq that attempted to bomb the positions of the forces of Islam in the "Val-Fajr-10" operations theater was shot down at 1517 today by the ever-aware air defense units of the armed forces stationed in the area.

Iraqi Cities Shelled

LD261717 Tehran IRNA in English 1712 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 26, IRNA—Eco-military centers in Iraqi cities of Al-'Amarah, Basra, Al-'Aziz, Al-Qurnah and Umm Qasr port were heavily pounded by Iran's artillery fire today.

According to a statement issued by the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) the shelling was in retaliation for continued enemy attacks on Iran's civilian areas.

Communique No 3,153

LD261755 Tehran IRNA in English 1738 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] March 26, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters flew several combat sorties Saturday heavily bombing Iraqi fortifications and troop concentration sites in the "Val-Fajr-10" theatre, northeastern Iraq and also in east of Basra, said a military communique here today.

The 3153rd joint staff communique said that all fighters returned safely to bases after inflicting substantial casualties and losses on enemy troops.

Iranian long range artillery pounded key economic and industrial centers of the Iraqi cities and towns of Basra, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Naft Khaneh, Mandali, Khanaqin and Banmil from 11:00 hours local time (07:30 GMT) Friday to 06:00 hours local time (02:30 GMT) Saturday.

Four Iranian missiles were also fired at military and economic centers in Basra, Khanaqin and Banmil yesterday.

Iraqi warplanes chemically bombed a village near Paveh town, northwestern Iran, at 09:00 hours local time (05:30 GMT) Friday, wounding several villagers.

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's naval gunboats intercepted and searched an oil tanker Friday but allowed it to continue voyage after making certain it was not carrying cargo for Iraq.

The Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday according to international regulations in support of the Navy, ignoring a warning from a foreign warship.

An undetermined number of Iraqi soldiers were killed and several enemy gun emplacements and observation posts, a munitions dump, a command outpost and motor pool were destroyed throughout the battlefields in artillery duels with Iran's Muslim combatants Friday.

An Iraqi patrol convoy was routed by Iranian artillery fire in Maymak, western sector, yesterday.

Heavy fire of the Muslim combatants checked Iraqi logistic and engineering operations in Sayyid Sadiq, Qasr-e Shirin, Kani-Sheykh and Chazabeh yesterday, concluded the communique.

Missiles Fired at Baghdad

LD270545 Tehran IRNA in English 0541 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Two surface-to-surface missiles were fired on two military targets in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad at 08:10 and 08:12 hours local time (04:40, 04:42 GMT) Sunday morning.

The missiles were fired by the missile unit of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in retaliation for the Iraqi Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning missile attacks on residential areas of Tehran, said an IRGC statement. The statement warned Baghdad rulers that IRGC will continue its retaliatory attacks until termination of the Iraqi mischief.

Operation in Northeast Iraq

LD270640 Tehran IRNA in English 0633 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Muslim forces of Iran launched "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-4" operations Saturday night in Darband Khan general region, south west of "Val-Fajr-10" operational theater (north eastern Iraq).

A number of strategic heights and several villages are reported to have been liberated at the early hours of the operations. Total area liberated is reportedly 20 sq kms.

More on 'Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4'

LD270756 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0731 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] According to a report of the IRGC General Staff Command, the mighty men of the monotheist army last night launched the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-4" operation in the general region of Darband Khan inside Iraq, south of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations, and succeeded in liberating the villages of (Sershadsero) and (Sershadkhuaro) and (Dering), advancing several kilometers inside the region.

At the moment, battles are raging to gain supremacy over the heights surrounding, Iraq's Darband Khan Dam.

More Territory Taken in Iraq

LD270820 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0743 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] The advance of the brave warriors of the monotheistic army along the northern axis to the southern side of Darband Khan Dam in Iraq continues. According to a report, during the "Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4" operations launched last night a further 9 km of the eastern bank of Darband Khan Lake have come under the total control of the various units of the naval forces of the IRGC.

It is noted that in the various phases of the "Val-Farj-10" operations more than 40 km of the eastern bank of Darband Khan Dam have been liberated.

Enemy Losses Detailed

LD270849 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0822 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] According to a report received here, after gaining total control along a 7-km front on the southern bank of Lake Darband Khan, your warrior sons of the heroic and resisting nation attacked positions of the feeble enemy forces in the villages of (Bash Hajar) and (Kani Ku) killing or injuring another group of more than 700 enemy personnel. The villages have been completely liberated and purged.

On the same axis of the "Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4" operations a further 10 sq km of land in Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province were liberated. The 506th Infantry Brigade of the defeated army of Iraq received losses of 90 percent and an artillery battalion was totally destroyed.

Iraqi Counterattack 'Crushed'

LD270926 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0902 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] Nurturers of brave men, pay attention. Following the victory of the fighters of the army of monotheism in the "Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4" operational area, the routed, weak, and desperate enemy, gathering together its defeated forces and using its armored units, attempted a desperate counterattack. This counterattack was completely repulsed and crushed by the combat and bravery of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force and the artillery and anti-armor units of the IRGC's Ground Forces, who hunted down enemy tanks. In these rapid operations, the blasphemy-fighters of the army of monotheism, totally destroying one enemy tank battalion, succeeded in destroying 20 enemy tanks and personnel carriers and in capturing 15 of them intact. May you persevere in your epic-making battle and may your strong belief become ever stronger!

South Al-Sulaymaniyah Liberated

LD270940 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0925 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] Resistant compatriots, pay attention. According to the IRGC Joint Staff, the epic-makers of the army of Muhammad, peace be upon him, following their rapid victories in the "Bayt ol Moqqadas-4" operational area, by taking control of the (Sorhang) Valley, completely liberated the southern section of Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province. With the liberation of this area, the fighters of Islam have at this moment positioned themselves near the border between the Iraqi provinces of Diyala and Al-Sulaymaniyah. They are engaged in the consolidation of their positions. May your battle be victorious!

Strategic Heights Captured

LD271012 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0918 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] The victorious men of the IRGC Ground Forces, following contacts between the northern and southern flanks of the operations by the forces of Islam, launched fierce attacks at the heart of positions of the infidels, capturing the (Pushtqalah) and Kaybarah Heights, as well as the strategic 1094, 9323, 968, 668, and 768 summits and the 770, 763, 611, and 622 heights from the clutches of the infidel Saddamists.

The warriors of Islam are presently 5 km away from the Darband Khan Dam, following their gaining of control of the above summits.

The liberation of extensive regions inside the plains south of Lake Darband Khan has increased the total figure of land liberated in the course of the "Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4" operations to over 45 sq km.

Missiles Hit Tehran, Esfahan

LD270739 Tehran IRNA in English 0734 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tahran, March 27, IRNA—Civilian quarters in Tehran and the central city of Esfahan were missile-attacked this morning. A number of civilians were martyred and wounded and several houses and cars were destroyed in the attack.

In Saturday's missile attack on Tehran an orphanage was hit as a result of which several children were wounded. Seven people were also martyred in Saturday's attack on Tehran.

Reprisal Missiles Fired

LD271044 Tehran IRNA in English 1028 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Two Iranian surface-to-surface missiles were fired at four Iraqi military centers in Basra Sunday morning in reprisal for enemy missile and air attacks on Iran's cities, according to a military statement here today. Two more missiles were unleashed against Baghdad this morning.

The statement said that Iranian long range artillery fire continued pounding military and economic centers of Basra, Qal'at Salih, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Al-Qurnah, Al-'Amarah, Khanaqin, Banmil, Naft Khaneh and Mandali Saturday and Sunday, inflicting heavy casualties and losses on the enemy.

It also warned that Iranian retaliatory attacks will continue until the Baghdad regime discontinues its mischievous acts.

Air Force Prevents Enemy Moves

LD270827 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0751 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcment]

[Text] Pay attention to news we have just received. Repeated bombing of enemy positions to the west of Darbandikhan Lake in Iraq by the fast-flying pilots of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force has removed all possibility of any kind of enemy movement. According to IRNA reporters from the "Bayt ol-Moqqadas-4" operational area, during the victorious offensive of the fighters of Islam the brave pilots of the Air Force, by repeated and relentless bombardment of the enemy's troop concentrations and supply points, have prevented any kind of movement by the enemy's troops and heavy and armored vehicles.

WIH Denies Planes Shot Down

LD270851 Tehran IRNA in English 0839 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—The War Information Headquarters today categorically denied an Iraqi claim Saturday that it had shot down three Iranian F-5 jet fighters.

A WIH spokesman told IRNA that Iran's Air Force had successfully backed the Muslim combatants in the course of "Val-Fajr-10" operations started in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province March 15.

The spokesman said ever since the operations started in the region no Iranian plane had been downed. He also denied an Iraqi claim that its forces had shot down ten Iranian planes in the course of "Val-Fajr-10" operations describing it as a "mere lie."

Iraqi Planes Bomb Hamadan

LD271003 Tehran IRNA in English 1001 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Residential areas in the western city of Hamadan were bombed by Iraqi planes today. Several people were martyred and wounded and a number of houses and cars were damaged in the bombing.

Communique No 3,154

LD271719 Tehran IRNA in English 1709 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Iranian long-range artillery fire pounded military, industrial and economic centers of the Iraqi cities and towns of Basra, Khanaqin, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Banmil, Naft Khaneh and Mandali Sunday, inflicting heavy casualities and losses on the enemy, said a military communique here today.

The 3154th joint staff communique said that two Iranian surface-to-surface missiles were fired at economic centers of the southern Iraqi port city of Basra at 09:45 and 0948 hours local time (06:15 and 06:18 GMT) Sunday.

An Iraqi helicopter attempting to attack Iranian positions in Sharhani, southern sector, was shot down by anti-aircraft fire of Iran's Gendarmerie forces Saturday. The gendarmes also destroyed an Iraqi observation post and 14 individual and group bunkers yesterday.

Iran's Muslim combatants, holding the upper hand, continued their relentless battles with Iraqi troops throughout the battlefields yesterday, inflicting substantial losses in men and equipment on the enemy.

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iranian naval gunboats while controlling shipping reconnoitered six oil tankers, four cargo ships, a tug boat and 23 other boats Saturday but traced no suspicious cases.

The Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman Saturday, concluded the communique.

IRGC, Kurds Destroy Bases

LD271055 Tehran IRNA in English 1045 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA—Special Forces of Hijrat Brigade-65 of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in cooperation with Iraq's Kurdish Hizballah destroyed three enemy bases in Kaviran [placename as received] region, Irbil Province, over the past few days, and killed or wounded 45 Iraqi troops.

According to Ramadan Headquarters of IRGC irregulars an Iraqi anti-aircraft gun was seized intact by the Muslim forces in the attack.

Khatem ol-Anbiya' Communique

LD271141 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] The Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters, the center for operations of the IRGC and the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has issued the following communique on the "Bayt al-Moqaddas-4" operation.

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. O combative and resisting ummah of Iran. O oppressed people of Iraq. O dear victims of the chemical attacks of the criminal enemy in the liberated areas. The fighting warriors of your proud ummah in continuing their holy defense, in response to repeated wrongdoings by the criminal foe in attacking our country's residential areas, and in avenging the martyrs of Iraqi Kurdish-inhabited villages—the town of Halabjah and village of (Enaf) and the dear martyrs of missile and air attacks of the mercenary Ba'thist forces on our country's residential areas—last night, while relying on God Almighty, staged operation "Bayt al-Moqaddas-4" codenamed "Ya Aba 'Abdallah, Ya Aba 'Abdallah, Ya Aba 'Abdallah" in the Darbandi Khan area, in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province.

During the operation, which was staged to the south of Lake Darband Khan and east of areas liberated in operation "Val-Fajr-10," in an area of over 50 sq km, the villages of Tolabi, Sharmiran, Kanikuh, (Sarshat-e Sero), (Sershat-e Quaro), (Bakhajar), (Kukuft), (Barmin), and (Zaran) were liberated and the extremely important heights of (Shahchemiram), (Shahsurmor), (Poshtqal'eh), and (Keyfareh) and nine other peaks in the area, including peaks 1094 and 932 were liberated from the sworn enemies of the Iraqi nation, thanks to the perseverence and surprising attack of the forces of Muhammad.

The operation, which enjoyed support from the Air Force, Army Aviation, and the Ground Forces artillery, and outstanding support-supply operations from the IRGC Navy and green-clad brothers of the Reconstruction Jihad engineering-combat units and the IRGC Ground Forces—the proud saga-makers—surprised the units of the criminal Ba'thist forces in several places in the operational theater and inflicted heavy losses and casualties on them. Ninety percent of the 560th Infantry Brigade, 60 percent of the 602d Brigade, and two tank battalions of the 36th Division and an artillery battalion were totally destroyed. More than 1,500 enemy troops were killed or wounded and hundreds were captured by the fighters of Islam. Four hundred seventeen soldiers, including a number of officers and NCO's, were transferred behind the lines.

During the operation, more than 20 tanks and personnel carriers and about 50 light and heavy vehicles and considerable quantities of equipment and hardware of the despondent Iraqi forces were destroyed. Fifteen tanks, including quantities of light and heavy equipment, were captured intact by the forces of monotheism.

Following the defeat of the enemy in all the predetermined positions and sectors and following the crushing of many unsuccessful counteroffensives by the mercenary Ba'thist forces, more than 20 km of the southern coasts of Lake Darband Khan were brought under the full control of the fighters of Islam. Thus, units of the IRGC Navy are at present deployed over more than 60 sq km of the eastern and southern coasts of Lake Darband Khan.

The Basiji saga-makers and their fighting brothers in the IRGC Navy are at present stationed on the heights overlooking Darband Khan dam, a few kilometers from Diyalah Province in Iraq, and are keeping all enemy movements under control.

[Signed] The Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters

Tehran on Tanker Attacks

LD271704 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] ASSOCIATED PRESS, quoting shipping sources in the Persian Gulf has reported that a Danish and an Indian tanker were attacked by gunboats in the southern sector of the Persian Gulf today and were set on fire.

According to this report the 337,000 tonne Danish tanker, "Karama Maersk," was attacked shortly before noon today some 40 miles west of Dubayy. REUTER's dispatch on the same subject indicates that the 24,529 tonne Indian tanker, "Jaynarayan Vyas" was attacked around noon today near the Emirate coast.

Pakistan

'Official-Level' Talks Held in Geneva 28 Mar

BK281534 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Official-level talks were held in Geneva this morning between the Pakistani delegation and Diego Cordovez, the United Nations envoy on Afghanistan.

APP, quoting official sources, says that the full Pakistani delegation led by Zain Noorani, the minister of state for foreign affairs, will meet Cordovez any time today for the indirect talks on Afghanistan.

8 Injured in Rawalpindi Explosion 25 March

BK260250 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] A bomb exploded at the (Koh Gadai) general bus stand in Rawalpindi yesterday evening, injuring eight people and damaging some shops. The injured have been admitted to the district headquarters hospital.

King Husayn Ends Official Visit, Departs

BK251608 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Excerpt] The Jordanian king was given an extremely warm send-off today when he left Islamabad this afternoon after a 4-day official visit to Pakistan. President and Madame Mohammad Ziaul Haq and Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo bade farewell to the king of Jordan and Queen Nur at the airport.

Senate Chairman Ghulam Ishaq Khan, federal ministers, parliament members, diplomatic representatives, the Rawalpindi mayor, councilors, and senior officials were also present at the airport. The distinguished guest was given a 21-gun salute at the airport. [passage omitted]

Commentary on Visit

BK250714 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Ghani Erabi commentary]

[Text] Jordan's King Husayn winded up his 4-day visit to Pakistan today amid complete identity of views on the paramount need for comprehensive peace settlement in two of the world's most sensitive areas, Afghanistan and the Middle East.

It is a measure of the moral integrity of the two nations that they have not hesitated to take a stand on merit against a superpower, the United States, on the Middle East issue; and against the other, the Soviet Union, on the Afghanistan question.

They found generally little (?latitude) between the aggression let loose by the Washington-backed Israeli regime in the West Bank and the Moscow-propped Najibullah regime in Kabul.

Both have so far defied repeated UN calls to vacate aggression and let the occupied lands decide their own future.

Additionally, both Pakistan and Jordan feel worried that unless aggression was effectively foiled, whenever and wherever it took place, the contagion could spread.

Voicing this fear, Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo at a luncheon hosted by him for King Husayn in Islamabad yesterday said the two countries were opposed to aggression, use of force, or the threat of a use of force in international relations.

They strongly uphold the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of states and the right of all peoples to determine their own belief and aspirations.

The king responded: Both Pakistan and Jordan share similar objectives and are committed to the same principles and ideals. They knew no names, but listeners [at the luncheon] had no problem figuring out what they had in mind. [sentence as heard]

Both Arabs and Pakistan have suffered aggression at the hands of neighbors harboring ambitions of regional supremacy. They recalled the Indian aggression of 1965 and 1971 and the Israeli of 1966 and 1973, the Israeli preemptive strike against the Iraqi nuclear reactor, and the Indian plan—that leaked out of the Indian prime minister's office—to launch a preemptive strike against Pakistan's nuclear installations at Kahuta.

And far from diminishing, the malice has increased, which is clearly illustrated by the latest Indian move that, with the imposition of Indian troops [not further specified], compromises right and sovereignty, and by the latest Israeli threat to knock out defensive missiles Saudi Arabia is installing around Riyadh that challenges Arab sovereignty.

Most military experts have agreed that the massive arms arsenals, buttressed by nuclear capability that India and Israel are building up, go well beyond their requirements of legitimate self-defense.

Foresight demands that all nations threatened by this manifold growth in the power potential of the two countries, driven by ambitions of regional primacy, begin at least to think together how they have to deter the looming aggression.

Naval Chief Departs for 12-Day PRC Visit

BK271650 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Admiral Iftikhar Ahmad Sirohey, the Navy chief of staff, left Islamabad for Beijing today at the invitation of Liu Huaqing, naval commander of the the Chinese People's Liberation Army, on a 12-day visit to the PRC.

During his stay in China, the naval chief will visit various naval installations, shipbuilding research institutes, and training centers.